

# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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## THE WONDER-WITCH.

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### I.

THE night was dark, but not with the hopeless blackness of a clouded atmosphere. The moon was in its last quarter, so that not even a glimmer could be expected from it until morning. What stars were visible showed pale, like the phosphorescent gleam of dead planets. A low wind stirred, flattened down close to the earth, as though fearful of the mightier possibilities of the altitudes. The tangle and scrub which decorated the corners of the picturesque old rail fences on either side of the road were invisible, and the road itself had to be travelled by faith.

Jack Donevan's horse seemed to know what he was about, however, and moved forward steadily, with apparently instinctive recognition of his surroundings. Where the road was level he loped freely, with the long, swinging action of his breed, and where the track roughened he slowed up a trifle and went with his nose to the ground, smelling his way like a dog. The reins hung slack, only prevented from falling forward on his neck by the mechanical clasp of fingers momentarily becoming more nerveless. For fifteen miles the horse had known himself master of the situation, but had taken no advantage. He was an honorable beast, bred of fine stock, and, moreover, loved with all his equine capacity the man who drooped forward, faint and powerless, over the horn of the saddle. Every now and then he would turn his head sideways and send the breath through his nostrils in a low-pitched eddying neigh which had in it an almost human note of inquiry and tenderness. Then he would prick his keen ears forward again and settle to his work, his eyes' full intelligence seeming almost to brush aside the darkness.

At first, his call had evoked response, a pressure of knee or of hand, a low-spoken word of encouragement; but for five toilsome

miles the good steed had felt only the heavy settling down in the saddle, the weary droop forward, with an occasional swaying which he had to counteract, as best he might, with his own movements.

With all the faculties with which nature had endowed him on the alert the beast did his part, faithfully, unquestioningly, as a woman might have done.

In a moment he rounded a curve which diverged from the main road into a short track leading up to an old-fashioned carriage-gate, painted white and showing in faint outline against the night. The horse paused, fumbled about with his nose, as though recalling an accustomed trick, found the latch and lifted it with his teeth, giving the gate a strong swing open by a jerk of his head. Before it could come back against him, he was through and loping along a drive-way which circled amid trees and terminated in a flagged space in front of an old stone portico. Here he paused, threw up his head, and whinnied loud and insistently, sending forth the call again and again, and pawing the flags with an impatient fore-foot.

The sound penetrated to an upper chamber and attracted the attention of a girl of fifteen, huddled down in an arm-chair beside the wide hearth, and of an elderly negress who was bearing her company.

"That sounds like Hawkeye, mammy, doesn't it?" the girl said, and bent forward, listening.

"Yes'm. 'Tis Hawkeye."

The girl's eyes dilated.

"Are you *sure*?"

The black woman rose, with a swift, sinuous movement, and advanced towards the window. She was but two generations removed from the forest, and her natural faculties possessed the near-at-hand heritage of savage acuteness.

The girl rose also, disclosing herself tall and slender, with a keen, high-bred face, and an atmosphere of maturity beyond her years. As she joined the negress at the window, the latter remarked,—

"I bin hear dat horse comin' eber sence he lef' de gate. He opened it hisse'f, too, kase it neber latched whenst it swung back, like it would'r done ef a man had flung it shet. 'Tain't but two o' we-all's horses kin open dat gate, Sweetheart an' Hawkeye. Mars Jack larnt 'em bofe. Sweetheart lopes sorter sleugh-footed. Dat's Hawkeye."

She threw up the sash, as she spoke, and cautiously opened the shutters. Ruth Donevan laid a hand on her shoulder.

"Can it be Jack?"

The neigh of the horse rang out again, supplemented by the clink-clank of the iron shoe pawing the flags. Ruth leaned out beyond her nurse, who moved aside, muttering, "Dunno what de name o' Gawd dat chile thinkin' 'bout, to let de horse squeal like dat. Fus' thing anybody know, all de quarters will be roused, an' den dar."

The girl called softly, "Jack, is it you?" Then, receiving no answer, she spoke to the horse: "Steady, Hawkeye! Ho, boy! steady! I'm coming."

When she drew back into the room her face was colorless, and her eyes dilating.

"Something has happened," she breathed. "Shut mother's door softly, and come."

Then she ran out into the hall and down the stair-way. In the lower hall a lamp, fed with lard oil, burned dimly. Ruth flared it up to its fullest capacity, and unlocked the front door. The curtain of night seemed to hang close, in palpable folds which must be parted with the hands, but Ruth did not hesitate. In an instant she was down the portico steps and had her hands on the horse. He whimpered low in his throat and rubbed his head against her shoulder, while her hands swept along his withers and closed on the man in the saddle.

"Is it Jack, or Hugh?" she whispered, rapidly. "Speak low. We hardly know whom to trust. The Yankees are hourly expected, and many of the field-hands are disaffected. Which is it?"

Still no answer, and the arm which she grasped seemed rigid. The negress had followed her, and stood framed in the door-way, the lamp in her hand lifted and thrust forward. Its rays penetrated the darkness and disclosed the horse, spent and soiled, and the figure in gray, motionless and slouched forward. The hat, caught up at one side with tiny crossed bayonets, was pulled down to the brows, but the girl knew her brother. Fear gripped her heart, but her voice was controlled, like the voice of an officer giving orders under fire. The atmosphere of her daily life was such as to force development, and she came of a spirited race and one prompt and decisive in emergency.

"It's Jack, mammy," she said, "and he's hurt. Put down the light and help me."

Then she drew the horse up close to the portico steps, loosed her brother's feet from the stirrups, slipped both arms about him, and was bracing her slim body for the strain, when brown hands pressed her aside and strong arms clad in homespun supplemented her own.

"Give him here, honey," muttered mammy's voice in her ear. "An' you stan' frum under. You ain't able. He's a big boy, dis chile,—de bigges' o' all. Let mammy take him."

Together they lifted the unconscious man from the saddle and carried him in to the library sofa. Then they fell to work on him with brandy and friction, striving to restore circulation and strengthen his pulse, which was so feeble as to be well-nigh imperceptible. One shoulder of his coat was soaked with blood, as was the right hip of his trousers. Ruth cut the cloth away with firm hands, and dressed the wounds as best she could, making compresses of the fleece of a toy sheep, and bandages of mammy's apron. They were bullet-wounds and must be probed, but such surgery was beyond her. All that she attempted was to stop the flow of blood until a doctor could be summoned.

As the brandy got in its work the patient's pulse improved and his heart-action strengthened; a fluttering sigh escaped his lips, and his eyes opened slowly, then closed again. Ruth plied him with more brandy, and, as she did so, gave rapid directions that a couple of the house-servants should be roused at once, one to go for the doctor, and the other to attend to the spent steed who had done such gallant service that night.

"Send Uncle Mose for the doctor, mammy. He's got more sense than the rest of the plantation put together. Tell him to take Firefly, and not to spare her. Let Mink look after Hawkeye. He'll know what to do. And tell both of them about poor Jack."

Which directions mammy obeyed to the letter, pleased that her husband and son should have been selected for first confidence. For in these parlous times of rapine and ravage and the shooting of men on the public highways, the old woman opined that the only negroes fit to be trusted were those of her own household.

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## II.

Jack Donevan's eyes unclosed again, and a light of joy and recognition dawned in them. He was at home, and he knew it. Ruth bent over and kissed him, her tongue a-throb with questions which, as yet, she dared not put to him. He took more brandy, and under its stimulus moved his lips whisperingly. She held her ear close, and found that he was inquiring for his mother, and for Edith Winston, the orphan cousin who lived with them and was his betrothed.

Their mother was better, Ruth told him, although she could never be well. It was creeping paralysis, Dr. Tazewell said, and she had lost the use of her lower limbs entirely. Her mind, however, was clear and active, and her interest in her family and belongings as comprehensive and omnipresent as ever. The long anxiety about her loved ones at the front, and the shock of their father's death, had developed her disease.

Edith had gone to bed early that night with a headache, but was all right otherwise. When mammy should return she—Ruth—would tell Edith of his coming and condition, and bring her to him. Their mother must be kept in ignorance until Dr. Tazewell should decide what would be best.

All this she told rapidly, and then answered an abrupt question as to the hour. It was on the stroke of twelve: the night was still young. Jack gathered together such strength as remained to him and mustered it to the front, under order of his will. All masculine and soldierly instincts were astir and fretting on the bit like mettlesome steeds hard-held. He had been trusted with a mission of import, and through untoward disaster was balked of its fulfilment. Events of magnitude might result from this detention of his,—events of fateful significance. His eyes gloomed and his breath panted; willingly would he have spent the remnant of life left him in speeding forward his errand. Delay might mean death to men in multitude; worse, it might mean defeat.

Gathering himself together, he pulled his sister down until her ear almost touched his lips, and in pregnant sentences of few words set before her the situation.

A detachment of the Army of Northern Virginia had been encamped twenty-five miles to the west, occupying a strong position. Here they were to await reinforcement from Stuart's command and



join battle with the enemy known to be occupying the country below them in force. That afternoon a scout, dragging a broken leg, had crawled into camp with intelligence of such importance as to make imperative an instant change of operations. A flank movement of the enemy had placed in jeopardy one of the few railways remaining to the Confederacy, and a hasty council of war decided upon abandonment of position and a forced march to the relief of the threatened point. This complication rendered it necessary to open communication at once with the reinforcement, which must be intercepted, informed of the change of base, and deflected to a junction at another point. Unwarned, the detachment would blunder into a trap set and manned by triple their number.

For this service the Donevan brothers had been selected, being tried men and bold riders, natives of the region, and familiar with every short cut, trail, and pig-path within a radius of miles.

There were two points at which a body of cavalry could conveniently cross the mountains,—gaps, called respectively Mitchel's and Glander's, situated fifteen miles apart. It seemed positive that through one or the other of these gaps would lie the route of the reinforcement. To guard against mistake, the brothers separated. The matter was urgent. Their instructions were verbal, imperative commands from one commander to another. This was deemed most prudent, as the country was known to be filled with hostiles, and death and capture were both among the risks to be taken. Lifeless brains may preserve secrets which lifeless or disabled bodies would be powerless to protect.

That the region was closely and effectively watched by the Federals was proved by the fact that Jack Donevan had been pursued and fired upon, and had escaped only through his superior knowledge of the country, supplemented by the sagacity of his horse, which was a trained fox-hunter and therefore capable of worming through forest by-ways. All would have gone well but for the wounds which disabled him. He was hit in two places, and the flow of blood was profuse. He could feel it coursing downward, warm and sticky, and ponding in his boot. While his head remained clear he had held straight for Glander's Gap, but, after a little, loss of blood confused him and he had much ado to hold himself in the saddle. At this stage the horse had assumed control of the situation and done the only thing which suggested itself to his equine intelligence. With the instinct of a homing pigeon he had swerved from his course and brought the wounded soldier straight to his home.

Jack groaned with impatience, and cursed aloud at his own impotence and the accuracy of the enemy's aim.

"Even if Hugh gets to Mitchel's all right, what good will that do if the squad crosses at Glander's?" he fretted. "If they ain't stopped they are all dead men, for every other gray-coat is away to the south to look after the railroad. It's enough to make a man curse his own carcass to have it fail him at need like this." He lifted himself desperately.

Ruth pushed him down again. Her brain was quick with a scheme which excited her like strong wine. Youth and inexperience

interplayed with natural daring and predisposition towards romance, making difficulties seem puerile and not to be regarded, and success a foregone conclusion. Chaotic images of knight-errantry, culled from old books and poems, fired her imagination and gave vigor and certainty to her words.

"Give over fretting," she ordered. "You'll start the bleeding again, and I haven't time now to attend to it. Take more brandy,—a good lot of it! Now give me the orders for Stuart's men. I'll take them to Glander's."

The wounded man's eyes quickened and held hers: he caught his breath hard,—almost in a sob. Recognition flashed from soul to soul like an electric current. There was no time for words, for disclaimers, for masculine protest or protectiveness. The motto of their house was "*Fortitudine et Labore*," and in the blood was no instinct of evasion of either responsibility or effort. Work which fell from the hands of one Donevan must be taken hold of and completed by another. It was a habit of the race.

Jack Donevan caught his sister's hand and wrung it hard, as he might have wrung the hand of a comrade faithful at need. What if she were a girl,—little more than a child? She was a Donevan, and that sufficed. He gave his instructions clearly, making her repeat them until letter-perfect. Then he added a bit of advice as to her course.

"Take Lapwing," he advised. "She's the best thing in the stables for mountain work, sure-footed and good mettle. You ought to make the gap by sunrise if you have luck. Take a pistol. A woman is safer for an errand like this than a man, but you'd better be armed. Cut in by Randal's after you pass Blue Lick: it will save about three miles. Are you sure you know the way?"

"Every foot of it. It's a straight road to Blue Lick, and by the time I get that far the moon will be up. Don't worry, brother: it's all right, and I'll make it, God willing. There's mammy coming in, so I'll call Edith and get away. Keep my going a secret as long as you can. Dr. Tazewell will be here directly."

She bent down and pressed a swift kiss on his lips, and then quitted the room. The wounded man lifted himself to look after her: a change passed over his face, and he dropped back unconscious.

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### III.

As she passed through the hall, Ruth caught up her brother's hat. It was flexible and soft, and would pull down securely over her braids. Ten minutes were consumed in slipping into a heavy gray homespun habit, and ten more in arousing her cousin and giving her sufficient insight into the situation to secure intelligent co-operation. Then she sped out to the stable, where a lantern burned always, secured her own saddle and bridle, and equipped the shining brown mare for the journey. Hawkeye stood in his stall and whinnied to her inquiringly, but the negro who had made him comfortable was already back in his cabin

beyond the yard. The stable-clock struck one as Ruth let herself through the back gate. The mare had been standing, and was as fresh as a roebuck and minded to play. She tossed her head gayly, drawing the keen wind into her nostrils, every nerve under her satin skin a-quiver like a watch-spring. Evidently this night escapade appealed to her fancy, and she curvetted and sidled as though it were daylight and the road thronged with spectators. It took Ruth full five minutes to get it into her head that not frolic but serious going was to be the order of the hour. After she realized what was expected of her, she laid back her dainty ears and settled to her work like the high-bred lady she was.

Up in the altitudes the atmosphere had thinned to a fine rarity. The stars glimmered and glinted like jewels against a dusk background. The road was dimly visible in short reaches. Every now and then Ruth, unwilling to trust entirely to the sagacity of the horse, would bend in the saddle and concentrate her vision, seeking right and left for remembered landmarks.

Mile sped after mile, and the pace held. The mare was going easily, her muscles playing with rhythmic regularity, her breath coming and going in long, even waves. The wind, keen, and edged from the mountains, struck in their faces and sent the blood riotously through their veins. The hoof-beats fell measured and true, like the throb of a heart full-fed with the life-current. The girl's pulses tingled. Every wild and romantic instinct of her nature uplifted itself with exultation. For a moment she lost sight of her mission, of the necessity for caution, of the danger ahead and the sorrow behind, lost sight of everything save the mad exhilaration of the race through the semi-darkness in the teeth of the wind.

Then she sobered down, as the mare had done, and went over her orders, jealously holding each word to its place. The gap to which she was bound was thirty miles distant, and the finish would be rough mountain work, but the going was good for two-thirds of the way and the mare was fresh. If nothing unforeseen should happen, sunrise would see her well through the gap. She wondered what time her brother Hugh had made up to Mitchel's, and whether he also had been pursued. The two gaps were fifteen miles apart, but Mitchel's was the one farthest from the point where the brothers had separated. Hugh would have to ride well to make it by daybreak.

About three o'clock the moon rose, a pale crescent, coming up from behind a shoulder of the mountains. The earth, in pallid illumination, lay revealed and concealed, like a stage under low light given through alabaster. Against the sky-line mysterious masses of blackness slowly materialized into mountains. Near at hand, trees and bushes upreared themselves spectrally.

The country began to lift, and Ruth turned aside from the main road. She had passed the plantation called Blue Lick, from an old salt-pool, and was approaching Randal's, a wild tract, with an absentee owner, through which ran a short cut possible only to the initiated. In and out among tree-stems, across spurs like a hog's spine, and through jungly bottoms, wriggled the trail, but Lapwing held to it

with the persistence and cleverness of an experienced hunter. She had followed the trail often before when her rider was intent on foxes or deer, and knew that higher up it would open into a road again. Ruth crouched in the saddle, her skirt gathered close in her hand, and her head bent to avoid outreaching and low-bending branches. She had been on the road a little upwards of two hours, and calculated that she must be nearing the entrance to the gap.

Presently they elbowed into a road, and Lapwing quickened her pace, while Ruth resettled herself and pulled Jack's hat farther forward. The hills were drawn close, and the track led upward through a narrow defile. A couple of miles beyond the gap, on the farther side, several roads intersected, and at this point Ruth had been instructed to station herself and await developments.

The moonlight strengthened: the eastern sky still showed dull and colorless, so that Ruth knew that she had made good time. She peered about anxiously, and bent earthward, as low as she dared, straining her hearing for intimation of the approach of cavalry. The mare seemed to share her expectancy, and turned her head from side to side, snuffing the wind. Ruth drew rein and rode slowly. At the intersection of the cross-roads she pulled up altogether and drew aside into the shadow of a clump of sycamores. The mare, a trifle blown, stood at ease, drooping her dainty crest.

Moment followed moment: the silence deepened until it seemed to vibrate through space in palpable waves. Ruth's hearing, strained to its limit, became preternaturally acute, so that the fall of a twig in the forest was distinctly audible, and the bark of a fox, away down the mountain, sounded almost at her elbow. The moonlight began to wane: the atmosphere chilled, for daylight.

Suddenly the mare lifted her head, and, before Ruth could check her, sent out her voice in a resonant whinny which the echoes caught up and bandied about, throwing it farther and farther afield, until, even after the first tumult had ceased, there vaguely came back to them, out of infinite distance, the tremulous whisper of a neigh. Ruth was aghast, for caution had been enjoined, and to her overstrained senses the mare seemed to have set in motion a very tornado of sound.

Nor was her consternation diminished when there came to her, from along one of the cross-roads, that which had been perceptible to the keener equine senses for many moments, namely, the regular trot of advancing hoofs. Ruth leaned well forward and drew the mare's head round so that she could get a hand on her muzzle. The shadow was dense enough to hide them, she knew, if only she could keep the mare quiet. A reconnoissance would be better before she should make known her presence, for the uncertain glimmer which precedes dawn was not sufficient to enable her with certainty to distinguish friends from foemen.

The hoof-beats approached; there was the clink of a sabre against a spurred heel, and the sound of a man's laugh. Ruth waited. As they neared, her accustomed senses informed her that the squad was small,—three horsemen, or four at most. Could it be a scouting-party? or an advance from Stuart's detachment? Her lips unclosed

to call a halt, then folded together again, a swift premonition, like a reflex of warning, holding her silent.

By this time the men were abreast of her, riding leisurely, and talking together in low tones. A deep voice was saying, "We'd better look sharp and keep together. These damned Johnnies slip through the woods like wild-cats. I heard a horse whinny five minutes back."

To which a younger voice made response, "A farm nag afield, I guess. Every gray-coat is away southward to look out for that railway."

Ruth cowered close and clasped the mare's nose. Did these men know about the expected reinforcement? she wondered. Were they simply a foraging-party? or the advance of a detachment hurrying up to occupy the gap and ambush for Stuart's men? What would be her own best course?—a dash forward, or secrecy now, with the effort later to cut across country and carry on her venture?

While thoughts like these rushed tumultuously through her brain, the mare decided the question. If there was one thing above another which she hated, and had little mind to put up with, it was being passed by other horses. A very devil of perversity took possession of her now: she twitched her head free, snorted defiantly, and made a bound forward. Ruth, holding her with a grip of steel, turned her into a cross-road at right angles with the way the men were going. Her face was pallid and hard-set, and her eyes blazed. Lifting her whip, she brought it down stingingly across the mare's quarters, forcing her into a run. As she did so, the sharp order came to her, "Wheel right! Forward!" followed by the thud of pursuing hoofs.

One moment,—two,—and the mare did her best, racing with neck outstretched and ears flattened. Twice the order to halt passed unheeded, and then the revolvers repeated it. Ruth could hear the sharp "ping" of the bullets as they whizzed past her ear. She could feel her horse failing likewise, and remembered that she had come thirty miles, at speed, before entering upon this mad race. The pursuers were gaining: one more spurt, and the leader would range alongside. Escape was impossible, and there remained only the choice between forcible capture, with the chance of being shot, and instant surrender. She chose the latter, trusting to her woman's wit for deliverance later.

Checking her horse suddenly, she drew her aside, so that the foremost of the pursuers passed her, carried forward by his own momentum. It was the hand of the second man which fell on her rein. Ruth could barely distinguish him in the half-light, a big, bearded fellow with a deep voice.

"Keep your hands down," he ordered, "or I'll blow your brains out. I'm on to all your damned tricks, and if you try to put anything in your mouth you're a dead man."

Then Ruth, out of sheer excitement and over-strain, did the best thing possible for herself,—that is, broke all to pieces, so to speak, and began to weep childishly.

## IV.

That which the girl feared was really the case. News of the expected Confederate reinforcement had been brought in to the Federals by a runaway slave, and had been acted upon with promptitude. The negro's report that Glander's Gap would be the route chosen induced a considerable force to move upward and invest it, securing position beyond, and stationing outposts. It was the picket relief which Ruth had encountered.

They questioned the girl sharply, after the first surprise at discovering her sex had passed, but failed to elicit from her one particle of information. Having begun to cry, Ruth found it much easier to keep on crying than to answer questions. Added to which, she was clever enough to be fully aware that a woman in tears can easily baffle a regiment. The sensations of her captors ran the whole gamut from exasperation to futility, and they finally let her alone, riding silently on either side of her and regarding her with disfavor.

They pressed forward at a sharp trot, for the sky was reddening for dawn, and they wished to get into camp and dispose of their prisoner without loss of time. Ruth dried her tears, but her lips lay together in an uncompromising line and her eyes expressed resolution. She was perfectly aware that unless she could fabricate some plausible and probable explanation of her night adventure no denial of being a bearer of secret information would avail her. Women were never abroad in the forest, alone and well mounted, at unseasonable hours and in troublous times, save on errands of urgency. And what story could she invent which would even savor of probability? Her imagination, usually active enough, refused to rise to the occasion, and her brain, wearied as well as quickened with excitement, would only busy itself with anxieties and the construction of hideous possibilities.

If she should be considered an emissary of the Confederate government,—a female scout, or spy,—what would become of her? She knew that there were many such in the secret service and that as bearers of despatches and blockade-runners their work was invaluable. If she should be mistaken for one of these bold and effective women, her fate would be sealed. Her ideas of the methods of men under arms were crude in the extreme, and, moreover, strongly tintured by youth and inexperience with romantic exaggeration. Her really probable fate, detention for a few days until such secret information as she might possess should become innocuous, never occurred to her. And had it done so she would, in her then state of excitement, most likely have dismissed it as tame and inconsequent. The faculty least used among us in stress is plain common sense, and *amour-propre* lifts us always to that which to us seems an adequate climax.

The two probabilities which Ruth fastened on with shuddering fascination were being sent North, a prisoner of war, or being tried by drumhead court-martial and shot as a spy. She had read of such things. To be sure, the spies executed had invariably been men; but this point, somehow, seemed to fail of significance.

She glanced aside at her captors, war-bronzed men both, bearded



and resolute. The man to her right had a hard face and cold eyes, but the expression of the other was kindly: he looked as though somewhere he might have daughters of his own. Ruth would not speak to them, but she reined her horse closer to that of the kindly-faced man. He noticed the movement and smiled.

In camp they were surrounded at once and questions were put as to the capture. Ruth's dismay increased sensibly when she found herself inspected with respectful curiosity as a woman of note, and it flowered when the low-voiced comment, "Coral Garnet," reached her ear. She felt that the worst possible was happening to her, and her heart sickened with anxiety and dread for her home-people.

To the right of the position was a good-sized frame house, used temporarily for officers' quarters, and to this Ruth was taken, the kindly man, whose name she had discovered to be Duke, and who wore an officer's straps, accompanying her. As they passed the group which surrounded the rest of her captors, she caught an observation from the hard-visaged man, given evidently in response to a comment or question.

"What do you suppose a woman would be doing in the place where we found her, alone, and at that hour, if not on a secret mission? I tell you these rebel women are worse than the men, and should be as summarily dealt with. 'Cats that go rattin' shouldn't wear gloves.' I wouldn't even trust a Confederate baby not to scuffle about on his all fours with despatches in his swaddling bands."

At which the rest laughed.

The personal search was decently conducted by a motherly and apologetic old negress, and Ruth, knowing it would result in nothing, submitted to it with the best grace she could muster. At its conclusion she was conducted to a small room on the upper floor, in which was another prisoner, apparently asleep on a sofa.

Wearied in body and soul-sick with apprehension, Ruth dropped into a chair, oblivious of the fact that she was not alone. Her thought hung persistently about her mother, bedridden and helpless, and her brother, wounded perhaps unto death. If she should be sent North, how could she communicate with them? how solve for them the horrible mystery of her fate? Love-quickenened, her imagination depicted to her their anxiety merging into anguish and culminating in despair. It seemed a pitiful thing, an intolerable thing, that, for her loved ones, her fate must be covered by that mournful, inexorable word, *missing*. Her head drooped over on her hands, and she moaned piteously.

In an instant a hand touched her shoulder, and a man's voice, with the familiar Southern inflections, inquired, gently,—

"Are you in pain? I beg your pardon, but you moaned. Can I do anything for you?"

Ruth lifted her head.

Beside her stood a slim, soldierly young fellow in a gray uniform. His face, beardless, save for an incipient moustache, showed manliness and character in all its irregular lines; his eyes were hazel and shadowed by lashes of unusual length, and his hair fell forward on his fore-

head a trifle unbecomingly. Even at the first glance Ruth noticed that his shoulders were strikingly square, and that his straps showed the double bars of a captain.

"You moaned——?" he repeated, interrogatively.

"Did I?" she responded. "I wasn't conscious of it. I'm not in bodily pain, thank you. None of the bullets hit me."

"You were fired on?"

"Yes."

The soldier bent over her, and lowered his voice to a whisper:

"What became of your despatches?"

The light came in strongly through an uncurtained window. Ruth looked him full in the eyes, for a moment, doubtfully. Then the doubt faded, her heart warmed to his uniform, and she trusted him. Her fingers went to her forehead significantly.

"Verbal?"

She nodded.

"What were they?"

In a whisper she gave them to him, word for word.

"Good!" he commented. "Apart from possible inconvenience to yourself, your capture won't do any harm. Stuart's men were to cross by the other gap. Who sent you up here? Are you in the regular force?"

"Force," she repeated; "what force?"

"Government employ,—scouts and blockade-runners. There is one, Coral Garnet she calls herself, who is of your build and general appearance,—wears a hat like yours, too, and a gray habit. When you were brought in, I mistook you for her."

The words she had caught outside returned upon Ruth and sickened her. She thrust aside this unwelcome reputation with energy.

"I've heard of Mrs. Garnet," she said. "My brothers both know her. But it isn't possible that she should be like me. Nobody ever said so before. She's a much older woman,—a married woman. I never carried despatches before. It was Jack—my brother—who was sent. He was pursued—fired on—wounded." Her voice shook. "His horse brought him home, all doubled down in the saddle and senseless. We thought him dead at first. When he rallied he told me about his mission. He couldn't rest because of it. I came on for him. It was the only thing to do."

The Confederate put out his hand to her impulsively.

"Of course it was," he endorsed, heartily. "I honor you. 'Twas fine, your coming. Now tell me about the capture."

Ruth did so in few words, winding up with poignant references to her own anxiety, the condition of things at her home, and the torture it would be to her people should she be sent North and they be left in ignorance of her fate. It did not seem singular to her that she should be opening to this stranger the very arcana of confidence. On the contrary, it was natural, well-nigh inevitable. They were of one people, actuated by the same hopes, influenced by the same emotions. In times of stress the unusual becomes the rule, and bonds such as these bind men more firmly than blood brotherhood.

"It's my mother I'm thinking of," she explained, tears starting to her eyes. "She is ill, has creeping paralysis, and may live and suffer for years. Think of anxiety such as my disappearance would be for one helpless like that! And Jack may be dying. I tied up his wounds to stop the blood, but I had no means of knowing whether they would be fatal or not. If I don't get home within reasonable time Jack will never forgive himself for letting me come. It will kill him!" Her voice trailed desperately into sobs, low, choking sobs, that struck dryly in her throat.

The man beside her shivered as though blows struck him. His brows came together in the effort to concentrate thought.

"There must be a way out, if I've got sense enough to find it," he mused. "Don't sob like that, please. It breaks me all up and I can't think. There's bound to be a way out."

He paced the room slowly; and Ruth watched him, comforted. Youth is quick to trust, and, despite the maturity of her aspect, the girl was not sixteen.

"Are you armed?"

The question was put abruptly.

Ruth shook her head.

"Jack told me to take one of his revolvers," she explained, "but I forgot it."

"Good," he declared again, satisfied. "It's lucky for you that you did. Coral Garnet always goes armed, and is as quick with a pistol as a man,—quicker than many. In your place she'd have done some shooting. She's known to be here-away somewhere, scouting, and there's a reward for her. Your likeness to her fades considerably with your hat off. If you'll allow me to suggest such a thing, I should say you'd better let your braids hang down your back, school-girl fashion. It will make you look younger. That's it,—a great improvement," as she took out the pins, in obedience to his suggestion, and let her heavy hair fall into two braids. "Your being unarmed is a strong card. Coral Garnet, as I say, never is. Now if we can trump up some motive strong enough to entice an inexperienced young lady into your present position, you may get off scot-free. It's got to be strong, though,—as strong as carrying despatches,—and natural. Can you suggest anything?"

Ruth shook her head. Then an inspiration came to her.

"Would a rescue do?" she demanded, eagerly. "I'm something of an actress, and we might work it together. Women do it in books. Heroines are always getting themselves into predicaments through rescuing people."

The soldier laughed out gleefully, slapping his thigh. "The very thing!" he declared. "The idea is a scintillation of genius. The grimmest war-dog that ever bayed will drop crest to romance. It's born in 'em, and nourished on women's kisses. We'll get up a story that will turn the regiment to wax in our hands. I'm your lover: the brother dodge won't work here, because these fellows know I'm from Georgia, and, besides, exhibitions of fraternal affection don't touch the spot as the other sort does. Lots of men have no experience

with sisters, but every fellow worth his salt cottons to sweethearts. Brothers have to fit in all around, too, and lovers don't. Lots of latitude is always allowed lovers. You are sure you don't mind?" This last suddenly, and in a changed voice.

"Not at all," Ruth declared, looking at him with the untroubled gaze of a child. "I'll be your sweetheart, or wife, or grandmother—*anything*, so long as I get out of this scrape and home to my people. It's imperative that I should get home to my people. It's awfully good of you to take so much interest and help me."

Not at all, the young fellow asserted: there was nothing which could give him such joy as would outwitting their captors. And for the rest, all Southern men were the lovers and slaves of all Southern women. Then they put their heads together, like children, and consulted eagerly, getting their plot into shape and arranging details. Ruth, the soldier's betrothed, had heard, no matter through what source, of his capture and detention at Glander's Gap. Being young, romantic, wildly in love, and absolutely familiar with the locality, the idea of a rescue, or, at least, of a lover's farewell, had taken possession of her, and it was in the attempt to put her thought into practice that she had been taken.

It was a project which could have emanated only from youth and inexperience, sun-fed by romance; but it had audacity at least in its favor, and also the rooted Northern conviction that sentiment ruled all the region below Mason's line and was perfectly erratic and irrational in its manifestations. Added to which, as the young soldier astutely remarked, love-affairs supply a touch of nature which makes the whole world kin.

Outside, in the passage, sounded footsteps, and arms were grounded, and a word given.

"It's the relief," explained the Confederate, rising at once to the situation. "We must pose, for as likely as not they'll inspect us, or fetch us in something to eat. We've got to be caught spooning, you know, to make the thing look natural and spontaneous."

He lifted her from her chair, and, leaning lightly against the back of it, sideways to the door, took her into his arms.

"Don't mind, please. A fellow whose sweetheart has risked her life to rescue him, or bid him farewell, is bound to be appreciative. He'd be a brute if he wasn't. When you hear the bolt turn, cling to me as passionately as you can, and hide your face on my shoulder. If your frame shakes with laughter it will be taken for emotion and work in immensely. That will do if the guard just peeps in; but if he enters bodily you must make dove-notes in your throat, and murmur 'Julian'—that's me—audibly."

These directions were whispered hurriedly, in a very ecstasy of glee. To his own mind, the Confederate had never been so abundantly well entertained in his life. He rested his cheek against the girl's hair, and watched the door warily, from the off-corner of his eye, conscious of thrills of enjoyment.

Two officers entered,—Ruth's acquaintance, Lieutenant Duke, and a younger man with a star on his collar. Their faces were serious, as

were their thoughts. They had come to conduct the girl to a chamber where a hasty council of war was being held. Several men of the troop had claimed to identify her with the famous Confederate scout Coral Garnet, and if their surmise should prove correct she would be a prize of no mean importance. In fertility of resource, courage, audacity, and luck, no scout attached to either service could rival the woman in question, and her capture would rejoice the one side as heartily as it would chagrin the other. When they caught sight of the tableau prepared for them, the officers halted, with a sudden and curious change of expression. This development was totally unexpected. They felt thrown back on themselves and *de trop*.

The Confederate took instant advantage of their hesitation. "You should have knocked, gentlemen," he observed, with the haughtiness of a man unwarrantably intruded upon.

Then, before they could recover from this set-back, he put the girl into a chair, gently, and faced round upon them.

"We are engaged to be married," he explained, curtly. "This young lady lives here,—away beyond the gap. I got word to her—no matter how—of my capture, and that I would probably be at this place several hours. The idea of a rescue, or at least a farewell, took possession of her, and last night she rashly made the attempt to get to me. She's familiar with the country about, but, unfortunately, ignorant of army tactics, or she'd have managed better. As it was, you know, she blundered right into the picket relief and got captured herself. And now, as a lady can remain in camp only a short time with comfort, I must beg that you will leave us together—and alone. No rescue is possible, or will be attempted. It will simply be granting fellow-beings the opportunity, which a woman's pluck and devotion have gained, to bid each other farewell for years,—possibly forever. We are fellow-men, and both of you have, doubtless, sweethearts or wives of your own."

As he rounded his period, thoroughly well satisfied with himself and the impression which he had produced, he turned again to the girl and lifted her hand to his lips. And Ruth, not to be outdone in histrionic ability, and underneath all curiously dominated, uplifted to him her eyes with a light in them that might readily pass muster for love, while her cheeks slowly paled, and then crimsoned.

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V.

The officers glanced at one another in perplexity. The affair had taken an unexpected turn, and they felt unaccountably touched, and at the same time baffled. The thoughts of each man flew to the woman who was dearest to him and rested there. However, "obedience is the first duty of a soldier:" so they informed Ruth of their orders and requested her to accompany them. But when she slipped her hand through the Confederate's arm and said, simply, "Come with me, Julian," they let the matter pass, discipline to the contrary notwithstanding. They had not the heart to cross her.

In the lower room were a dozen or more soldiers, the general in command and part of his staff. They sat about at ease, and all looked at Ruth curiously, commenting to one another upon her appearance. Seen in daylight and without a hat, her youth was so apparent that many dismissed the question of identity with the famous spy before it was even mooted. Coral Garnet was known to be a middle-aged woman and a matron. Even the soldiers who had been struck with the resemblance at first, when confronted with Ruth, wavered in statement, and were finally forced to admit that it was no more than a chance resemblance in height and costume.

"Coral Garnet wouldn't have knocked under without fighting," one soldier observed. "She's got a keen finger for the trigger, and is a crack shot. You can bet your life, if the scout had been your quarry, toes would have been turned up somewhere. Duke says this girl was unarmed, and terribly nervous."

"What was she doing in the woods at night, then, with her horse winded like he'd travelled a long distance at speed?" contemptuously demanded the grim-visaged man, whose name was Gaston. "She was up to mischief, or I'll eat my sabre. Rebel women are as tricky as the devil."

"Hush; the old man's pumping."

Bit by bit, with the cleverest hesitations and reservations, Ruth allowed the story which she and her ally had concocted to be drawn from her. She heightened its effect by her manner and expression, lending it a leg where it halted, and investing it with naturalness and probability by the impression she thrust upon her hearers that they were intruding into a sanctuary. The Confederate was immensely proud of her, and, at a specially effective point, openly beamed upon her, and hugged her hand to his side.

Her high-bred young face, paling and flushing by turns, her womanly tenderness, and the marvellously sweet inflections of her voice, all seemed to fit her so pre-eminently for the position of heroine of a love-episode that the men unanimously abandoned all thought of connecting her with such grim realities as secret service anent military movements. In sooth, so touched were these veterans with the idyllic beauty of the tale that they applauded Ruth to the echo, and felt that Lieutenant Duke voiced the popular sentiment when he remarked,—

"That girl knows how to love a man. She's the gentlest and pluckiest filly I've seen for a long time,—thorough-bred, all the way through. I vote that she have her liberty, and a salute from the regiment. Her horse is outside, and she knows her way home. Let's send her back to her sick mother with all honor, gentlemen."

And the old general, a jovial, kind-hearted man, with daughters of his own, brought his fist down into his open palm with a resonant whack, vowing that the little rebel was a sweetheart to be proud of, and that should a merciful Providence ever make him a widower he would come South for a wife.

Then he spoke to an orderly and had glasses brought in, and champagne from his private store, and filled up for all present.

"Three times three, and all standing," he commanded, handing



Ruth a full glass of the sparkling wine. "Sheathe swords, young lady, and join us in drinking your health and a speedy end to all troubles. All ready?" He lifted his glass, smiling. "Then here's long life and a gay wedding to the fittest mate for a soldier I've seen for half a century!"

And so the blue veterans clinked glasses merrily and toasted the two gray impostors, who durst not look at one another for fear of giving vent to the mirth which would be their undoing. And the Confederate, mustering such gravity as he was master of, returned cordial thanks, while Ruth, forgetful for the moment that these men were enemies whom it was her business to hate, smiled sweetly on all and submitted her slim hand to be shaken.

Soldiers are delicate and considerate in *affaires de cœur*, so the officers drifted out, one by one, until Ruth was left alone with the Confederate.

She turned to him impulsively, and put out both hands.

"How can I ever thank you enough?" she breathed softly. "Your cleverness has rescued me from a most hateful predicament, and saved my home people from harrowing anxiety. It has even evoked friendliness from our foemen. But for you, my situation would have been most miserable."

He clasped her hands close, with a smile on his lips which his eyes would not second.

"Thank rather your own histrionic ability," he replied. "I never saw a prettier piece of acting. For a moment I was swept away by it myself, and believed fully that we had been lovers for ages. You were wonderful. Indeed, it's quite on the cards that I may be among the first batch of exchanges purely and solely for your sweet sake. You see, therefore, that I am the obliged party, after all."

He talked with gay *insouciance*, but he was not thinking of what he was saying. This episode would be something fragrant and fair to take with him to prison, but the fact that it was over saddened him. He looked down into the girl's eyes with a sudden longing to take her into his arms in real earnest and to taste the sweetness of her soft mouth.

Her unconsciousness held him in check, however, so that, perforce, he simply tightened his clasp on her hands and kissed them instead.

Then he drew a ring from his finger and slipped it on one of hers, bidding her keep it for him until he should return, "in memory of the pretty little comedy" they had played.

"It's a quaint old thing, and has been with my people for generations," he explained. "When I come back I will tell you its history."

Ruth turned the ring slowly.

"Is that a promise?" she inquired, wistfully. "If so, I'll keep your trinket in pledge for redemption." Then her voice faltered, and tears came to her eyes. "War is so cruel!" she cried, "and the chances against you so many, I'm afraid for you!—I'm afraid! You will come back for the ring *surely*? When the war is ended, or you are exchanged, you will come?"

Without fail, he promised, unless, of course, the fatalities incident

to a soldier's career should overtake him; in which event she must keep the ring as a legacy from him. There was no other woman to whom he would rather bequeath it.

He lifted her fingers again to his lips, and, under his touch and the look of his eyes, something within the girl wakened and leaped forth to meet him tumultuously. It frightened her, for she was young, and wist not what it might be: so, being frightened, she drew her hand away and turned from him, veiling her eyes.

And she went forth from beside him, the same, and yet different, for the element which is celestial had touched her, and from childhood she had passed into the heritage of women.

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## VI.

Eighteen years of shadow and sunshine, of storm, tranquillity, and the rotation of seasons, passed over the land. Old conditions, disrupted with anguish and blood, fell away, and from their ruin new ones evolved, modified, and progressed in the painful process of a gradual adaptation. The war-riven States were putting forth new growth, slowly, experimentally, as forest trees, storm-broken, spring anew from the roots. The war itself had become a memory,—burning still, but with dying heat, and a gradual, inevitable thickening of ashes.

The Donevan homestead, like its fellows in Piedmont Virginia, showed signs of these changes. There was about it an aspect of patience and making the best of things, if one may be allowed the expression. There was no unthrift visible in dilapidation of out-houses or enclosures, but there was also no evidence of perennial prosperity in the way of new paint and whitewash. Fortunately, the mansion was of brick, substantially built at a time when scamping in architecture and the misery of making ends meet were both unknown quantities. It uplifted its chimney-pots, therefore, and its quaint old English gables as sturdily as of yore, defying the elemental forces to do more than soften its tones to truer harmony and add grace and lustiness to the ivy which mantled the slates of its roof. The old stone portico also had resisted time's tooth, and showed columns as upright, from grooved base to voluted capital, and tiles as unsunken, as they had been in the previous century, when a coach-and-four had stopped at the flagged space before the entrance and Hugh Donevan—the first of the name in Piedmont Virginia—had gallantly lifted his low-country bride in his arms and borne her up the stone steps to place her, according to ancient usage, with unsullied feet, within the portal of his home.

Of the Donevans, two only were left in the old home, for the angel of death had smitten the first-born and his mother, so that they two lay beneath the dark yew-trees in the "God's acre" in the far corner of the old garden. Hugh and Ruth lived together within the old walls, and together watched the crops seeded and growing to the harvest, and the slow seasons wax and wane. Life in the country had changed, for stress of circumstances had caused the separation of name and estate in all parts of Virginia, with a subsequent drifting of fami-

lies and individuals to fields more propitious to the struggle for existence than could be heavily-mortgaged ancestral acres. When Ruth went to church, or to infrequent social functions, she saw many strange faces, and also faces which were not strange, and yet were unfamiliar amid such surroundings. In some moods it saddened her, while in others she could philosophically recognize the inevitable sequence of it. In all reconstruction the bottom rail has a tendency to work to the top.

Why Ruth herself made no change was a marvel to the neighborhood, for the somewhat indefinite promise of her girlhood had been outstripped in fulfilment, and at thirty-three she was a beautiful woman. Her Irish-blue eyes, the heritage from some far-away ancestress, were capable of deep tenderness as well as gay sparkles of humor; her spirited head could bend graciously as well as uplift itself with hauteur, and the charm which life had developed in both manner and expression was as much more potent than the crude charm of youth as wine is more potent than water. That a woman so pre-eminently fitted to adorn the married state should elect to remain single was publicly felt to be an insult to Hymen (a god held in repute in rural communities), and likewise a reflection on those of her sex who were content to close with almost any sort of offer.

"It isn't that men don't ask her," Mrs. Judge Lawrence was wont to observe, "for they do,—quite a number of them. Four summers ago, when she was with me at the White Sulphur, she was something of a belle. A gold-plated creature from New York—I've forgotten his name, but he drove blooded stock and sparkled with diamonds—was quite wild about her. His family tree was a shrub, but they say that his fortune was in seven figures."

"What reason did she give for refusal?" the doctor's wife would inquire; not that she cared specially, or did not know, but that social conventions must be maintained at all hazards; and in uneventful country neighborhoods personal conversation is prone to consist of variations on a few established themes.

And Mrs. Lawrence would explain. "Ruth, as you know, my dear, has prejudices,—lots of them. She didn't love the man, and there was an end of the matter. Ruth is womanly. She'd never turn her back on a man because he was self-made,—particularly when, as was the case with the New-Yorker, he fits all around, and has had the basting threads picked out. Donevan prejudices are apt to be *real*. They think that the *mariage de convenance* bears the mark of the beast."

Miss Marian Vandan, a guest of the Tazewells, when the matter was broached to her, attempted to put it in a new light. She was New-England-born, but as romantic as though her cradle had been rocked in a land far removed from realism and the actualities of prosaic existence. She had encountered the Tazewell girls on the neutral ground of a church school in New Jersey, and had accepted their invitation to visit them in Virginia with joy, and the thrilling but concealed conviction that somehow she would be transported into a storied past and abide continually among conditions made familiar by novelists. To

this fervid mind, afoot for romance, an enjoyable reason for Ruth Donevan's celibacy presented itself.

"Perhaps there's a romance in the background," she suggested, eagerly,—“a lover in adverse circumstances, or a soldier brought home with the cruel wound in his forehead hid by the flag draped over the coffin-lid, and a blood-stained ribbon in his inside vest-pocket. Such things happened not so long ago. Was Miss Donevan old enough to have had a lover in the Confederate service?”

"Well, hardly," had been Mrs. Tazewell's comment. "Ruth was little more than a child during the war, and the last years of it were spent in her mother's sick-room. Ruth's war record is that of a domestic angel, I fancy."

To which dictum Mrs. Lawrence had not only given adhesion, but added testimony:

"Her father was killed quite early in the war, you know. And after Mrs. Donevan's collapse Jack came home wounded, and went into a fever and died. And Edith Winston, the girl he was engaged to, grieved herself into mania, and had to be sent to an asylum. Hugh came home disabled too, and for a long time could do nothing to lift the burden from Ruth, who had to be daughter and son, master and mistress—and often servant besides. Take it all around, that old time, for Ruth, was too full of able-bodied troubles to admit of much phylandering. I, for one, don't believe that the real reason for her remaining single all these years lies buried under a bloody banner anywhere."

And so the *pose* of perpetual mourner, for Ruth, was vigorously done away with.

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## VII.

Of all the glad months of the year October is king in Virginia. Then the hills prank themselves in glory of crimson and umber and gold, like Carnival maskers, and gay bedight flaunt against skies of pure blue tenderly deepened to violet. Then the swift mountain streams, cleared from the September rainfall, become a joy to the trout-fisher, as they gurgle melodiously adown cascady reaches and slip into still pools where the speckled beauties hide amid rocks or hurl themselves in air in short leaps of pure gladness. The rivers also are tranquil and limpid, with waters still sun-warmed enough to make black bass and other game fish lively and seductive, and to give men an excuse for congregating, in flat-bottomed boats, in likely coves and eddy places to swap stories of former catches, wrangle over the relative value of bait, and sample the contents of each other's pocket-flasks.

From the stubble-fields and corn-lands come the cry of the crane and the whistle of the partridge. The air is awir with the flurry of migrating wings, and from the high regions falls earthward the resonant clangor of wild geese bound southward. Then "ole brer rabbit" grows wary and winks his eye knowingly at the box-like construction, made deceitfully pleasant by cunningly contrived apertures and a sweet smell of apples, which appears suddenly in every convenient brier-patch. And "young brer rabbit," with the conceit of inexperience, lays paw

to nose, in derision of counsel, and yields blithely to carnal appetites, with results truly tragic. And in the deep forest wild gobblers, resplendent in burnished black plumage picked out with iridescent scintillations, and corpulent with gleanings of sweet acorns and chestnuts, grow nervous and spar at one another and hector their female following. Their wattled heads crimson gloriously, and they pass swiftly from one feeding-place to another, pausing often to stand on one foot, with the other uplifted and doubled into a fist, and their heads all aslant, hearkening for danger, and suspicious of a blind in every brush-heap.

Then, when "a southerly wind and a cloudy sky proclaim a hunting morning," or, more often, when the desire for a run strikes the hunter, the hills will echo the hoarse music of hunting-horns, the ring of men's voices, and the bell-like baying of hounds. Then men become dominated by a single idea, and their conversation grows circumscribed, dealing principally with tales of past prowess or ingeniously fabricated explanations of present failure. Then women let out all the tucks in their patience, serve cheerful apprenticeship to meals at inconvenient hours, simulate interest in undying anecdotes, and pretend to consider a lump of gray fur at a saddle-horn equivalent to a royal accolade.

One specially invigorating October morning Ruth Donevan stepped out on the porch and drew the air into her lungs with keen relish. Her plain gown of navy-blue serge set off the fine lines of her figure, and threw out the warmth of her flesh tints, the lustre of her Irish eyes, which lay under curled lashes, like violet lakes under shadow, and the dark hue of the hair coiled loosely at the nape of her neck. From the crown of her spirited head to her slender, arched instep she was *chic*, showing race as a thoroughbred shows it.

In her hand she carried a housewifely key-basket, through the handle of which was thrust a fresh handkerchief, and her eyes smiled as the breeze brought to her the faint, far-away echo of the hounds.

An old dog, considered past work, and so left behind, rose stiffly from a mat in the hall and joined her, pressing against her knees and whimpering. As the wind quickened and brought with it the deep, trailing note of the leader of the pack, a light flickered up in the old hound's eyes; he sprang down the steps with sudden simulation of his former vigor, waving his tail gallantly and throwing up his head in a belated effort to give tongue. The incongruity of it touched the old beast as a twinge of rheumatism caught all his members: he lowered his crest apologetically and returned to the porch, pitifully conscious that his day was past, and that, like Jubal, he was but the "rune-writ story" of that which he had been.

Ruth bent down and patted him, drawing his muzzle into her strong, soft fingers, and smiling sympathetically into his bleared eyes.

"It's hard lines, Rollo," she said,— "hard lines on an old dog to be out of it all and hear the hunt pass. Mistress knows all about it. Don't be down-hearted: there's food and fireside and memory left. The young dogs get weary and foot-sore, old hound. So make the best of it."

The dog whimpered again, but more cheerfully, and pressed close to his comforter.

October wine was in the blood of another old hunter, and Ruth laughed out gayly as a horse appeared from beyond the corner of the house, trotting on to the lawn with ears pointed and nostrils aflame and turned windward. He was a very old horse, so old as to be gray around the muzzle and groggy at the joints, but the race lines of his lean head and thin neck were still unmistakable, and his spiritual instincts were active and showed breeding.

"Why, Hawkeye, you too?" laughed the lady, noting the old steed's interest in the far-away chase and the excitement with which he whinnied a response to the wind-brought trailing note. "You want an aftermath also? Most of us do, I fancy. Only life won't move backward for any."

She caught her breath suddenly, and into her eyes crept the wistfulness which comes to the look of those who wait through years for that which never comes, and watch until hope thins to a pale mist on a far horizon.

The gate-latch clicked under the jeans-mittened hand of a tall, lanky woman in a yellow sun-bonnet, who let herself through and advanced across the lawn. She carried on one arm a split white-oak basket, which swayed her one-sided, as though its contents might be heavy. But for this rhomboidal attitude, she would have seemed straight up and down, without a curve or indentation from her angular shoulders to the hem of her scanty-skirted garments.

The basket was covered with an old checked cotton apron tied down by the corners, in the centre of which was a charred hole; through which, from time to time, a green-headed drake would thrust forth excitedly, shrieking "day—day—day!" with strident inquiry, evidently much perturbed in spirit as to what this unprecedented journey might portend. As often as this would happen the woman would pause patiently, catch the slack of the apron with her disengaged hand, and jerk it upward, at the risk of decapitating the drake, who, more agitated than ever, would flap about with his wings and bounce up and down on his manacled legs, arousing clamorous protest among his fellow-voyagers.

When she got within calling distance, the woman halted cautiously, and addressed Ruth in a tone of anxiety:

"Air that thar dog fierce?"

"Not at all," responded Ruth, reassuringly. "Come on, Mrs. Wheat. It's only old Rollo, and if he should bite any one it wouldn't hurt. He hasn't a tooth in his head."

The visitor advanced, but with lingering symptoms of perturbation. "It's all right ef you sesso," she admitted, politely; "but I ain't got no hanker arter strange beasties nohow. An' some toofless dogs air gifted with right solid gums an' kin mumble real disagreeable."

Ruth laughed relishingly. She was great friends with Mrs. Wheat, whom she had long ago dubbed "the county bulletin-board." Whatever news was stirring in the district was sure to be received by her, and equally sure to be circulated. She did it without malice, however,



and no social disturbance of an unpleasant nature could ever be traced to her door, so that in hearkening to her gossip no woman was driven to feel afterwards that she had taken her neighbors at disadvantage.

"What's the news, Mrs. Wheat?" Ruth inquired, after the old woman had been established in a rocking-chair and the customary social amenities had been gone through. "Anything astir in the neighborhood?"

The visitor made no immediate response. The drake had his head out again and was clamoring with virile persistence. Mrs. Wheat had deposited her basket on the porch floor, while she pushed back her sun-bonnet and replied to civilities, and the bird had utilized his opportunity to discover the present aspect of the situation. She swooped down upon him at once and smote him a blow on the head which discouraged investigation and caused him to squat suddenly and pull back to cover.

"That 'ar drake be the wuss cur'os'ty-struck fowel in the deestric'," she announced, in disgust. "Thar ain't a mite o' faith in him nowhar. Stead o' settin' peaceful, an' heartenin' up them ducks o' his'n, an' gittin' thar minds pacified, he ain't had no consarn 'bout'n a morshal thing 'ceptin' his own 'sturbance. Eve'y time I so much as jostled the basket out popped his haid, an' 'day—day—day!' he'd squawk, liken nobody warn't ill-convenienced 'cept him. I h'isted him out onct an' shuck him fur his meanness, but it didn't 'pear to settle him none."

Ruth laughed again. Mrs. Wheat's remedy for selfishness struck her as inadequate.

"Why didn't you pin up the hole?" she demanded.

The old woman laughed in her turn.

"'Twarn't no thorn-bush handy whar I come along," she explained. "An' I didn't feel no call to smother them pretty-behaved ducks a-headin' o' *him*, nother. Ef you want 'em, Miss Ruth, you kin git 'em. I never did keer no morshal chance fur ducks nohow,—leastways for dr'les. I jus' kep' 'em awhile to clean the penniwinkles out'n we-all's branch, thet was cuttin' the craws plumb out'n my chickens."

Ruth lifted a corner of the apron and inspected the ill-conditioned drake and his harem. The ducks, three in number, were white, with pretty golden beaks and bright eyes.

"Will they do to raise from?" she inquired.

"The ducks will," Mrs. Wheat answered, honestly, "but the drake ain't fitten. They're real Polands, an' he's jus' a common puddle. Sister M'ria gin him to me—I 'lowed fur a present, twell I foun' out she gin him fur a fault. He's the satefules' fowel ever war hatched anywhar! No feedin'-coop kin be built whar'll turn him. Burrow under he will, same as a mole, an' scoop up all the leetle chickens' vittles. An' he'll ketch them pore mites o' chicks by the scruff o' the nake an' tweek 'em, same as a dog tweeks a weasel. An' deedies! Lord! he's jus' turrible on deedies! Looks like he's got a pertie'lar spite ag'in' 'em. Thirteen as likely young deedies as ever pipped aig thet thar outdoin' fowel have slaughtered afore I foun' him out." Then, bethinking her suddenly that the depreciation of stock is a poor way to bargain, her tone flattened from its indignant pitch with divert-

ing suddenness. "He's fat, Miss Ruth," she declared. "Jus' feel o' him. Heavy as a shoat, an' yaller! Rumble up his feathers an' view how yaller his meat is. I 'lowed you'd want to eat him, an' outdaciousness ain't no 'count in the kittle. Some folks even 'lows it h'ists the flavor." Her eyes twinkled shrewdly.

Ruth laughed again, and admitted that there were occasions when corpulence might be estimated above character. When the business transaction had been satisfactorily concluded and the birds consigned to the poultry-yard, she idly repeated her query as to neighborhood doings. Mrs. Wheat loved to hear herself talk, especially before an appreciative listener.

She settled herself without more ado, and a sudden interest flamed up in her eyes. She had indeed a story to tell.

"I ought'r named it befo'," she declared, remorsefully. "An' I 'lowed to do no yuther way; but thet thar drake discommoded me. Do you mind o' Kit Gentry, Miss Ruth?—him that had his laig cut off a-workin' on the railroad, an' w'ars a stump cornstant to save totin' ov a crutch? He married Bet Kitchen leetle better'n a year ago, an' kyar'd her South, afoot, to git work on a section."

Ruth nodded. She recalled the man perfectly without this ample identification. His father had occupied the position of overseer on the Donevan estate in ante-bellum days, and the Gentry boys had been playmates and henchmen of her own brothers. Many a time she had played in the log fort which they had helped Jack and Hugh to construct in the spring hollow, an erection which had been made to represent, in sequence, every place of conflict known to the young Donevans, from a Roman citadel to the stockade of King Philip. She had been too small to take part in the battles, besides being that despised creature, a girl. But she could recall the thrills of interest with which she had watched the partition of forces, and how proud she had been to bedaub the faces of white and black warriors with red mud and fuller's earth and to arrange for them top-knots of turkey feathers. Kit Gentry she remembered with special clearness, because whichever side he fought on he always got captured. Even the colored contingent used to be able to cut Kit off and take him. Not from lack of courage, either, but from sheer miscalculation and want of foresight.

Later, when cabin and mansion alike had sent forth their sons to the front, nobody had been surprised to hear that Kit Gentry had been sent North with the first batch of prisoners. Nor did it seem odd that he should have missed exchange, and so have spent the whole four years of the struggle fretting like a leashed hound at Point Lookout.

"I remember him perfectly," Ruth declared. "He was the unluckiest mortal alive. Something was always happening to him."

"An' is yet," the visitor eagerly acquiesced. "He've got the sorries' luck an' the stickies' whar any pore creeter ever did have. Misfortin laid nose to his scent soon, an' she've kep' it late, an' swappin' sides an' takin' to water nary one don't fling her out. A clay-bank mongrel couldn't follow no closer to heel 'en what she've done sence she started trailin'. Kit be 'flicted with pore jedgment, fur one thing; an' he war bornded with all knowledge, fur another. Nothin'

never could be larnt him. Thar was that laig o' his'n. T'other fellows skedaddled whenst they seen ther rock totter, an' bawled to Kit 'twas comin' an' he'd better skedaddle too. Stead'n o' which Kit bawled back they war a passel o' pa'tridges, an', whilst he war sassin', ther rock settled down on his laig an' cruppled him."

She paused a moment, reflectively.

"Thar was his mar'age likewise," she pursued. "We-all tole him Betty Kitchen didn't have no health. She war mealy, an' sodden, an' bleached, like a pertater-sprout growed in a cellar. But nothin' wouldn't do him but he mus' have her, an' double his bad luck with hern."

"He loved her, perhaps," Ruth suggested, a faint color flickering into her cheeks.

"Maybe so," acquiesced the other, dubiously. "But he never proved it. Her folks all moved out to Indianny, an' stead'n er gwine too, like Bet wanted him, he ups an' foots her off to Georgy afore the shine was off'n her weddin'-shoes. 'Twar plumb onconsiderate!—an' she a sickly 'ooman. 'Twarn't nothin' to hatch in thet nest 'cept'n trouble, an' it pipped out in August. Bet she took fever arter her baby was born, an' died right out, an' thar's Kit lef' behindst with a teenchy mite o' a boy, an' nobody to do fur it, no more'n nothin'. It's pitiful!"

"Where is Kit now?"

"Here. He got back frum Georgy las' night arter sundown. Bet sensed, at ther las', that Kit's luck warn't ekall to ther strain o' fetchin' up no baby, an' she got him to promise he'd give ther boy to his brother Torm's wife. They-all be cousins, well as sisters-in-law, an' sets store by one another."

"But they've all moved away," Ruth exclaimed, in dismay, "the whole business of them. There isn't a Gentry left in the county, that I know of. Tom was the last. And he gave up the house in Hickorynut Hollow in June and moved his family to Richmond. What became of the others I don't know."

"Some went one place, an' some another, 'cordin' as they spied a chance. They be all cleaned out, stock, lock, an' barrel, 'ceptin' Kit. Kit's here. He hadn't hearn 'bout Torm's break-up, an' looked to fin' ther family whar he lef' 'em, in ther hollow. He war pow'ful down-sot. He'd stumped up frum Georgy, eve'y foot o' ther way on his tree laig, an' toted ther baby. Arter buryin' Bet, he hadn't no money to ride on ther train, an' nobody never offered to help him with ther chile, an' thar was his promise to sick him on. 'Twas ill-convenient for ther baby, he 'lowed, but thar didn't seem to be no uthery way to git back but to pat ther grit with his own foot an' stump."

"It's a wonder such a trip didn't kill the child," Ruth averred.

"It mos'ly did. Kit done his bes', but 'twarn't ther sort o' bes' whar belonged to a baby, an' it shows it. 'Tis ther lonesomes, sorries'-lookin' leetle mite o' a creeter ever I seed,—jus' fur all the world like 'twas its dad's luck come into human shape. My nighes' way here is through Hick'ynut Hollow, right by Torm's house, but, thinkin' 'twas empty, I never noticed pertic'lar, twell I got right ag'inst it an'

a light smoke broke out ther chimbly. That s'prised me. Then whenst Kit stepped out an' named it to me fur God's sake to come in an' tell him what to do fur the chile, I couldn't sort out head frum tail, at fust. I got so sorry fur that thar pore crupple it made me right silly. Kit 'lowed whenst he got home las' night an' foun' his folks flitted he bruk down an' cried like a gal. I don't blame him."

Neither did Ruth. On the contrary, she felt a stricture in her own throat, and a stinging sensation under her eyelids. The desolation of the way-worn cripple's home-coming touched her to the quick.

"Did you do anything to help him?" she questioned.

A sudden forlornness settled like a cloud on the elder woman's face. She seemed aloof and isolated.

"Thar was a box in ther house, an' I fulled it with pine-tags, an' spread Kit's weskit over 'em, fur a cradle," she said, humbly. "Pine-tags is healthy to sleep on. I 'lows to cook up a passel o' vittles whenst I gits home an' send my ole man down with 'em. I ain't no nuss myself, bein' nervy and 'feard to handle doctor's truck. I'll git word about, too, so ther child kin be keered for."

Ruth held back words nearly spoken, and substituted others. In the background of the old woman's life was a tragedy, in which a mistake in the giving of medicine had resulted fatally to one she loved. This confession of incapacity was an indirect allusion to it, and the first that Ruth had ever heard her make. A swift compassion filled her, and she hastened to assume the responsibility too great for these other hands.

"You did wisely to mention this matter to me," she said, gently. "We are much nearer the hollow than the other neighbors, and the house is on our land. I'll go over myself and see about the child. Mammy can tell me what to do. She knows all about babies. I wish she could go with me, but she's bedridden with rheumatism. Can you get word to the doctor, do you think? I must take Tony with me to carry some bedding and other things which must be needed."

To be sure she could, Mrs. Wheat declared. Indeed, a visit to the Tazewells was part of her day's programme. Mrs. Tazewell wished to have a rag carpet made for her upper hall, and had given the job to Mrs. Wheat, who was the best carpet-weaver in the county. A consultation about rags and dye-stuffs was necessary: so the old woman could kill two birds with one stone.

"I'll start the word round 'bout'n Kit likewise," she affirmed, as she donned the yellow sun-bonnet and rose to depart. "You'll git help afore sundown. Mandy Turner's a prime nuss, an' I'll step by to see her. Maybe she'll come fur the night—her, or Sarah Carter. I'll name it to both. Good-day, Miss Ruth. I 'lowed Kit could count on gittin' help from here fus', bein' as they-all played 'long o' you-all, an' fit 'long o' you-all too."

When her foot was fairly in the path, the old woman delayed her going to give Ruth another item of news, overlooked in stress of greater matter:

"'Twas named at the sto' yestiddy that thar war comp'ny at Tazewell's; not ther New York gal, nother. She've been thar some time,

an' liable to stay, bein' satisfied 'long o' we-all's vittles. This here's a man. Come yestiddy by train. Jim Bryant seed him, an' 'lowed he war straight an' lusty. I ain't hearn whether he fetched a chist or come in a bundle. Jim studied out 'twas ther New York gal's beau."

## VIII.

True to her promise, Ruth set out about her preparations at speed. While the negro boy Tony saddled the horses she interviewed mammy as to things requisite for a sick infant, and got them together. At the old woman's suggestion, too, she investigated an old chest of drawers in her mother's room, and selected from the hoard of half-worn but sentimentally preserved baby-linen such articles as might be needful. After its long, man-tended journey, the little one's sanitary condition was likely to be deplorable. She packed up also a bottle of milk, white sugar, and a few heavier provisions for Kit's sustenance, adding at the last a few odd bits of crockery.

"That poor creature has come back to bare walls and naught else," she mused, while making her collection. "Any odds and ends the Gentrys may have left vagrant negroes have snapped up long ago, of course. I'll take a frying-pan and a coffee-pot, too, as well as a couple of comforts. For the rest of the necessities Kit must levy on other neighbors until he can make definite arrangements."

The ride through the woods was enjoyable, for the atmosphere was bracing from the light frost of the previous night, and redolent with rich autumn odors. Wild grape-vines netted the roadside, heavy with acid black clusters; the persimmon-trees showed a thick studding of tawny fruit upon every bare twig, and in sheltered nooks and low places euphorbia blossomed, lilac and white and scarlet love-vine tangled gloriously, and belated "black-eyed Susans" made sunset patches of color. Beside the pathway meandered a brisk mountain brook, stone-set, and fringed on its banks with wild gentian and ferns, with a loftier top-growth of dogwood, sassafras, and water-poplar shoots, amid thickets of spicewood and marsh willows. Overhead gray squirrels leaped nimbly among the branches, and deftly popped nuts into knot-holes and crannies, garnering the wood harvest with thrift. Along the pathway ahead a rabbit loped slowly, and Ruth put her horse into a run for the pleasure of seeing the creature mend his pace to long leaps, and then dart sideways into the bushes, where his brown fur made him indistinguishable from the fallen leaves as he squatted in form, with his cotton-tail hidden.

When Ruth entered the clearing in which the cabin stood, the sun had passed the meridian and the light-rays were slanted to an angle which brought out the soft grays and browns of the old logs, the red of the clay chinking, and the mellow duskiness of the shingles, with definite sharpness. A light line of smoke rose from the chimney and lay in aerial spirals against a background of forest.

Ruth dismounted at the rough porch, bidding Tony hitch the

horses and bring in the basket and bedding. Despite Mrs. Wheat's preparations, the interior of the cabin chilled her by its pervasive atmosphere of desolation. The door of the shed-room, at the back, hung forlornly open, giving a continuation of the dirt and barrenness which seemed to intensify it. Through the door-way and the unsatisfactory small-paned window the light entered hardly, and in cross-currents. The unsightliness of the place was increased by a papering of newspaper illustrations all over one side, largely shredded, and hanging with the grimy, pasted side outmost. These unsavory decorations the breeze toyed with, shaking them about, and producing with them a clever imitation of the scuffling and scratching of rats. The only points of redemption in the scene were the hearth, which had been swept clean with a pine bough, and the fireplace, wherein was a low blaze, surmounting bright embers.

On one side of the hearth was a rough bench, formerly used as a support for the "bee gums," and beside it the box converted by Mrs. Wheat into a bed for the child.

As the door darkened with the entering guest, Kit Gentry rose and faced it. He was a short, thick-set man, and stood awkwardly by reason of the wooden pin which supplied the place of his left leg, gone from the knee down. His face was care-worn and rugged, with an obstinate mouth, and a look of hopelessness in the eyes which required but little to turn it into desperation. "With luck against him" seemed written all over the man. He had a child's nursing-bottle in his hand, and the brim of his shabby wool hat was flattened against the crown, so as to leave sight unimpeded.

Ruth came forward at once, with extended hand and pleasant words of greeting.

"Mrs. Wheat told me about your getting home last night and finding no one," she explained, "and also that the baby was sick. I came over to see if I could help you."

There was in her tone and manner no hint of patronage, only straightforward kindness as from one human being to another. The hard lines about the man's mouth relaxed a little, and the gloom in his eyes lifted.

"I'm obleeged to you," he replied, simply; "an' ther chile needs women-folks' keerin' badly. He air fevered some, an' hev been fur a week. He's done quit relishin' his vittles. 'Twar a hard lick findin' all my folks flitted. I——" He paused abruptly, and gazed straight away, over her head.

"It was all hard, every bit of it," assented Ruth, gently. "Mrs. Wheat told me, and I'm sorrier than I can tell you. We played together, you know."

It was a womanly touch, and made just the difference between pity and sympathy. The rough fellow had fineness enough to appreciate it. His lips twitched and his eyes moistened. He made no response in words, but he let her take the child's bottle from his hand and assume undisputed authority.

"Perhaps the milk is sour," she suggested. "That may be the reason he won't take it. Have you tasted it?"



"Naw'm," the father admitted. "I p'intly do despise sweet milk myse'f, so I never thought 'bout samplin' his'n."

Ruth smiled superior and emptied the contents of the bottle behind the fire. It was of the gravest importance, she assured him, that infants' food should be pure and fresh. Then she despatched him to the spring for water, and turned to the child.

It was curled, like a kitten, on its father's vest in the box of aromatic pine-tags, and covered over with a checked shawl which Ruth recognized as belonging to Mrs. Wheat. It was miserably puny, with purple veins showing under its pallid skin, and great, dark shadows under its eyes. Its little frame seemed to Ruth nothing but a skeleton; its hands were like birds' claws, and its clothing was stiff, uncomfortable, and malodorous. But for the need of more practical compassion, Ruth could have wept over it.

Even to her unpractised eyes the stress of the little one appeared extreme, and she summoned Tony and despatched him at once for Dr. Tazewell, bidding him follow should the doctor be from home. It would not do now to trust to Mrs. Wheat, she decided. The old woman was on foot, and, besides, would probably loiter and gossip by the wayside.

Ruth found a battered tin basin and an empty tomato-can, both water-tight, in the shed-room, and, out of sheer womanly revolt at the little one's appearance, did the best thing possible for him,—that is, administered a hot bath and a change of raiment.

"Don't you think he looks better?" she inquired of Kit, who had withdrawn to the wood-pile during the ablutions.

"I dunno," the man answered, with bucolic bluntness. "He's a sight cleaner, an' better by that much. To me, he don't favor nothin' 'cept a fresh-hatched catbird. He don't hardly ape human."

Which was so absolute a verity that it made Ruth wince.

The child refused his food fretfully, wailing in a piteous undertone. After a while he dropped into a doze, which gradually deepened to stupor; his pulse became small, quick, and irregular; he coughed a little, feebly and spasmodically, and his skin seemed almost to sear Ruth's cool hand when she touched it.

Time passed, and her anxiety deepened. She glanced across at the child's father, who avoided her eye and slouched forward with his elbows on his knees and his face set hard. He understood that which was passing through her mind by its reflex on his own. Pain quickens even ordinary intelligence to acuteness.

About three o'clock came the welcome clatter of hoofs, and Gentry rose awkwardly and hurried out to meet the doctor.

Ruth faced the door expectantly, her head lifted. The sun had rounded the corner of the house, and its beams slanted through the soiled window-panes, touching the woman's hair, and slipping downward to rest on the brow of the babe on her knee.

Through the door-way entered a stranger,—a tall, square-shouldered man, with hazel eyes under long lashes, and a heavy brown beard.

## IX.

Ruth's look proclaimed her disappointment. Medical aid was so sorely wanted. A quiver passed over her face. The stranger came forward and reassured her.

"Dr. Tazewell was from home when the messenger arrived," he explained. "The case seemed urgent, so I took the liberty of coming in his stead. Mrs. Tazewell advised it. She'd been talking with an old woman who was excited about this child. You can trust me. I'm a doctor."

In her relief, Ruth smiled up at him cordially.

"It was good of you to come," she said. "This baby seems very ill."

She made room on the bench beside her, and the physician sat down and bent over the child on her lap.

"How long has he been comatose?" he inquired, after a rapid examination.

"Two hours certainly," she responded. "Soon after I got here—about half-past twelve—he began fretting, a feeble, miserable wail. He was dirty and uncomfortable, so I took off his clothing and gave him a hot bath. Was that wrong?"

"No; the best thing possible, if you'd only gone further and given him some whiskey and milk. Have you a cup and spoon convenient, and a little milk?"

Ruth indicated the basket on the other side of the hearth. The doctor helped himself deftly, mixed a milk-toddy with a portion of the contents of his own pocket-flask, and administered a spoonful or two to the patient. Then he arranged the box more comfortably, with one of Ruth's quilts, and took the child from her.

"Leave him there for a while," he directed. "It's better for him than being held. Now, what did you do with that clothing?"

Ruth pointed out a dingy little heap behind the bench on which she was seated, and watched this masterful stranger a trifle curiously while he fished the things out with a bit of kindling-wood and tossed them into the fire. He seemed to her even more direct and forceful than is usual with his craft.

"Is the disease contagious?" she inquired.

"Not at all," he answered. "It's gastric fever. But there is no telling what infection the child has been exposed to. Mrs. Tazewell gave me to understand that the mother is dead and that the father carried the baby from Georgia in his arms. Is that so?"

Ruth bowed assent, and then gave him the story, briefly, in outline. The principal actor in it was busy with the doctor's horse, which had been ridden at speed, but he might enter at any moment. The pathos of it struck her anew.

"These people have been connected with us for years, and have lived on our land," she volunteered, in explanation of her own intrusion into the affair. "This man's father was my father's overseer, and we children played together. It grieved me dreadfully to hear of the trouble. He had no money, and it was the only way open to keep his

promise to his dead wife. Did you notice that he is crippled? Then think of his getting here last night to find an empty house and a cold hearthstone. Wasn't it hard?"

Her eyes filled as she spoke: she had, for the instant, lost sight of the fact that he was a stranger, and lifted her glance to him as frankly and unconsciously as a child might have done. The doctor returned her gaze for half a second, and then looked away. A tender-natured woman, he decided, and one whose heart was prone to pull the wool over the eyes of her reason. And, man-like, he admired her for it, feeling more drawn to her than to any woman he had met for years. It is never the woman with "no nonsense about her" who gets the firmest hold upon men.

"The experience was pretty rough," he admitted. "But the fellow would have shown more tenderness by less precipitation. The child was too young."

Ruth was instantly on the defensive.

"He couldn't know," she declared. "An ignorant man, with no experience with babies. His thought was of his promise and of his wife's wish. According to his light, he did his best."

"Illogical and partisan," thought the doctor; "a thorough woman. I wouldn't be surprised if she has backwoods prejudices in favor of domestic duties, the supremacy of man, and a hereafter of rewards and punishments. After half a dozen years of individualism and dominance of the ego, this sort of thing is refreshing."

Aloud he made no comment, for Kit Gentry stumped in with an armful of wood for the fire, and was promptly pounced on by the medical man and put through a cross-examination as to the child's previous condition and symptoms. In the course of the talk it transpired that Kit, in his homeward progress, had passed through two infected regions: one, a town in central Georgia where yellow fever had been prevalent, and another, in North Carolina, where there had been several burials from small-pox. If the fellow had set out on a germ-quest, it did not seem, to one of his hearers, as though fuller or more varied opportunities would have been necessary. And the fact that, according to his own account, Kit had "come a-jumpin' through, like a snake-hunted hop-frog," the moment he became aware of the presence of disease in a locality, did not, in the medical mind, render the situation innocuous. To the doctor, for the nonce, the tragic-pathetic mountaineer was degraded into a perambulating germ-distributor.

He chewed the end of his moustache meditatively as he listened, and before Kit, in recital, had hopped safely away from the second infection, he was busy emptying his pockets of the bottles of bismuth, calomel, and other possibly needed drugs, with which Mrs. Tazewell had loaded him, in search of the sprayer and disinfectants with which he had provided himself.

Ruth watched him with interest. Her chief knowledge of anti-septics was derived from Dr. Tazewell's diatribes against that which he was pleased to designate as the "idiotic superfluity" of Professor Lister's theory.

When he had diluted his carbolic acid to his mind, the doctor advanced upon Ruth with the precision and force of a conquering army.

"Be so good as to stand in the light, young lady," he ordered, "while I disinfect you;" which he proceeded to do, systematically, and from the throat down. "It's the ounce of prevention," quoth he, "and you held the baby in your lap, of course, while you changed him, and very possibly handled his clothing afterwards."

He circled around her at short range, and Ruth lifted her eyes to him with a laugh in them. His head was a trifle forward, and his eyes intent on his work, for he was directing the fall of the atomized drug on her bosom and shoulders. Something in his position, the sweep of his lashes, the beauty of his forehead, or the mutinous fall of a slightly-grayed lock of hair across it, touched, in a shadowy way, a well-nigh intangible association. It was as though the ghost of a forgotten harmony or the faintest suggestion of a once-liked perfume had been reflexed from the infinite upon the woman's spiritual senses. The passing was instantaneous, a wind-blown shiver of mist, but it modified the expression of the eyes uplifted to the physician's grave face, and also invested that face with an interest other than the situation called for,—an interest utterly removed from that esoteric *afflatus* which humanity, for want of finer definition, calls sexual attraction.

Unconscious of that which had happened, the doctor's gaze followed the movements of his hands, which manipulated the bottle and bulb with accustomed touches. When the job had been completed to his satisfaction, his countenance became illumined with shameless self-approbation.

"You're all right now," he informed Ruth, cheerfully. "I will stake my professional reputation on your safety. And, by the way," as a sudden thought came to him, "you must excuse the liberty I have taken. We are so accustomed, in hospital, to doing this sort of thing to any and everybody, when occasion arises, without parley, that I fell to work on you as a matter of course. None of the spray touched your throat or hands, I hope? Carbolic acid burns like the mischief, you know. I tried to be careful."

Ruth sniffed at her garments, the light of laughter flashing back to her eyes.

"It was legerdemain," she declared. "I'm unseared, but covered. After this I feel that I could voyage in a plague-ship and escape scathless. Is this what dear old Dr. Tazewell calls modern tomfoolery?"

"A specimen of it," the doctor laughed. "He's a rare bird, is Tazewell. As a man, fine to the heart's core, and professionally good, as far as he goes. He is limited, though, according to standards now accepted, and as ferociously obstinate as a boar of Ardennes. We've been having a duel in the *Therapeutic Gazette* about this very matter, and I find him a foeman worthy of my steel.—Now, my friend," turning to Kit, "it's your turn. Just take off your coat and hold it up wrong side out. Now put yourself in position, so that I can get at you fore and aft. We'll see what a germicide has to say to the invoice of small-pox and fever you may have under hatches."

He set to work again, disinfecting the mountaineer to the bone. Gentry submitted, not understanding the novelty, and scorning it, but moved to compliance by the rustic conviction that a doctor, like a balky horse, must never be crossed. When a touch-and-go exposition of the theory was attempted, however, he guffawed unreservedly, and set it aside with an aphorism.

"Techin' is ketchin'," quoth he, in derision, "an' I nuver laid paw to daid folks nor sick ones, nor so much as squatted to res' in the shade o' thar houses. I jus' hustled with the cub time I got wind o' 'em. But," with polite abnegation, "if you-all gits confidence out'n my stinkin' wuss'n a pole-cat, fire away."

By this time the child required attention, moaning feebly, and tossing its head from side to side with increasing restlessness. Its pallor had given place to a dark flush, and the pulse was weak and thready. The doctor glanced out at the westering sun, took a notebook from his pocket, and scribbled a few lines, which he handed to Gentry.

"If you'll contrive to get this to Mrs. Tazewell," he said, "I'll stay all night." To Ruth he added, in an undertone, "You'd better go home and send me a servant. This place is as naked as the hall of Doorm."

Before an answer could be given, the outer silence was ruptured by the creaking and complaining of dry axles, accompanied by belligerent adjurations. Ruth hastened to the porch, with both men at her heels.

A cart was entering the clearing, drawn by a hornless steer, and heaped high with a miscellaneous collection of household plenishings, gleaned from the surplus of the neighborhood. Beside the vehicle trotted a freckled-faced boy, cheering on his quadruped with a hickory sapling and language. And behind it, weary, but triumphant, toiled Mrs. Wheat, and with her another sun-bonneted female, whom Ruth with joy identified as Mrs. Amanda Turner, a woman of resource and discretion, and, admittedly, the best nurse in the vicinity.

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## X.

The controversy anent antiseptic practice in the columns of the *Therapeutic Gazette*, to which Dr. Julian Guthrie had alluded, was mainly responsible for that gentleman's coming to Virginia.

Dr. Tazewell was a bigot of the old school, whose avoidance of all microbic matter was from instinct and habit, not from recognition of its malevolence. On the contrary, and within limits, he considered dirt wholesome, and when he ordered its removal did so solely because of its unsightliness and its tendency to encumber space. He was neat in his practice, because lack of neatness was ungentelemanly and troublesome. And after surgical operations he cleaned his instruments, not as a measure of precaution, but because, should the observance be neglected or badly performed, the quality and temper of the steel would be injured. The result was that he instinctively obeyed

laws which he denied, and saw truth so clearly through an auger-hole as to be dogmatically positive that that was all of it. In proportion to his lack of perception of primordial connection, and the inevitable amplification of effect, was the doctor's denial of the existence of both, and the temper he showed when his own limitations were hinted at. The hue and cry raised by Lister was not only foolishness to him, but gross aggravation, and a disciple of the great Scotchman was in his sight as one who vainly beateth the air, or runneth hither and yon with salt for birds' tails.

Silent dissent may be wisdom, but it is not nature, so that when not only the medical world but his own favorite journal doffed hat, and kept it off, to the Edinburgh prophet, accepting his principle as good working theory, the Virginian got angry, and, without more ado, proceeded to tell people exactly what he thought of them. Despite their rank conservatism, his articles were so amazingly clever that they attracted the attention of Dr. Guthrie, an antiseptic enthusiast, and so grieved him that he incontinently rushed into controversy in the mad hope of rescuing a man from ignorance by pommelling him.

For months past the two medicos had dissected each other with scalpels of keenness, rejoicing in the process with a great joy, and bringing to it a superabundance of skill and incisiveness. They skewered each other's opinions and exhibited them wriggling; they stuck lancets into each other's illustrations and let out the life-blood, and to assertion applied the caustic of demonstration.

And among the subscribers to the *Gazette* there was mirth, even loud laughter, such as ariseth from frequenters of cockpits. And the editors grinned into their receipt-books and secretly encouraged both combatants by the cunning repetition of compliments gleaned from other journals, and out of all this misdirected energy made profit.

The ultimate outcome of controversy is either murderous hatred or a desire for personal acquaintance. The first is the refuge of bullies; the second, the climax for scholars and gentlemen. When therefore a courteous and finely-flavored letter came up from the South, Dr. Guthrie was quite prepared to appreciate it at full value and meet it half-way. And in the course of the interchange of civilities Dr. Tazewell had occasion to visit New York, where the younger physician, who was a transplanted Southerner, entertained him to the limit of his ability. This necessitated, in the opinion of the Virginian, a return of hospitality at as early a date as was practicable.

Guthrie had come South a little worn with overwork, and a little heart-sick for the modes and methods of his own people. His stay was to be limited, but he was resolved to crowd into it as much renewal of old association as he could manage. He wanted to get away from his present, with its intellectual strain and its hurry of doing, and into that past which was sweet with the peace of slow accomplishment and almost valueless time. In other words, he had come South to rest.

The schemes of men "gang" as "aft agley" in these days of improved calculation as ever they did in the simpler times when Robbie Burns drew poetical parallels. So Dr. Guthrie, a seeker after repose, had hardly accepted, with courteous comprehension, explanations anent



the unavoidable absence of his host, quit himself of the dust of travel, and satisfied the cravings of hunger, before Mrs. Wheat arrived and did outpour so piteous a story that the women, *en masse*, turned about and regarded him with compelling eyes, as one who might save the situation. In self-defence, it is true, he made some feeble protest founded on professional etiquette, but nobody paid the smallest heed to it. What woman with her heart touched to the quick by a pathetic baby-story is going to bother her head about formality? To horse and a rescue is all that she thinks of. Coerced by popular sentiment, therefore, Dr. Guthrie slipped back into harness, and by the time Tony appeared and, with every sign of enjoyment, increased the dolor of the situation, was ready to accompany him to the hollow.

During the ride Tony volunteered the information that "we-all's Miss Ruth cert'n'y *did* bother herse'f a sight 'bout po' white folks an' niggers whenst dey was in triberlation," and further intimated that the doctor would find the said charitable lady in possession. Guthrie paid little heed, being more interested in observation of the locality than in impending female experiences. When, therefore, he entered the cabin and beheld Ruth, with her sun-glorified hair, and the child on her knee, and encountered the light of her violet eyes, it was to him as a revelation. Through his mind, on the instant, swept a medley of suggestions,—Madonnas, forest pansies, fragments of verse, and the look of women's eyes when the agony is past and they know that, through them, a soul has entered upon a heritage of life.

He did not analyze his sensations; indeed, there was scarcely time to take note of them before the necessity for action pushed all else into the background. And, being a man and a scientist, he thought no more of it, absorbing himself in the work lying ready to his hand. A woman would have kept the thing and pondered it in her heart.

The night, after Ruth's departure, progressed uneventfully. The child's condition varied with the waxing and waning of the disease. Mrs. Amanda Turner justified her reputation, not only by instant and intelligent co-operation with the doctor, but by the deft energy with which she transformed the aspect of the cabin. About midnight, Gentry, worn out and unserviceable, threw himself on the bed provided for him by his neighbors, and sank into the deep slumber of exhaustion, leaving the watch to be shared by the doctor and Mrs. Turner, who sat unwinkingly in the chimney-corner and dispensed local information in a melodious drawl.

With sunrise appeared Dr. Tazewell, to look after his guest and excuse himself, on professional grounds, for not having come sooner.

"It was after midnight when I got home," he explained. "A protracted maternity case, with complications. My wife told me where you were, and showed me your note. I'm very much obliged to you; although it seems a pity not to let you kick out of harness for so much as a day. Now, by your leave, I'll have a look at the patient and a word with Mrs. Turner. Afterwards we'll ride home to breakfast."

The atmosphere had chilled during the night, and a rime of frost covered everything. In the soft land of the clearing, and along the sides of the roads, in moist places, were upliftings of ice spume, top-

crusted with dirt, but below white and beautiful. The world, in the shadow, appeared cheerless and bleak, but where the rays of the rising sun illumined it there was sparkle and scintillation. Against the horizon the mountains uplifted, dark steel color where they rested against the pallor of dawn, and almost black below the light-line. Guthrie bared his forehead to the biting kiss of the breeze, and lifted his gaze to the hills in reminiscent inquiry.

For a space the track had been narrow, a mere bridle-path through the forest. Now it opened out into a road, and Dr. Tazewell, who was leading, reined in his horse and allowed his guest to come abreast. His observation had the combined keenness of the physician and the hunter: his eye travelled over Guthrie, from crest to heel, with appreciation, and finally took note of some subtle quality in his expression.

"You sit your horse like a cavalryman, Guthrie," he announced. "And your eyes question the hills. Were you out with the boys in the sixties? I've always intended to ask you."

"Yes," Guthrie answered. "My brigade was the Fifteenth Georgia Light Horse. I served under Hampton. Three years and four months I had of it,—active service, that is. For fourteen weeks I coddled my wrath and practised vain swearing at Fort Delaware."

His companion laughed grimly: he had seen the inside of a prison himself, and knew all about it. Then he looked at Guthrie again.

"An over-young cock for the gaffs, in those days, I should say," he observed, critically. "How old were you when you volunteered? And where were you captured?"

Guthrie smiled reminiscently. "Eighteen the day I first smelt battle-powder," he declared; "and that was in '61. As to my capture, that was beyond those mountains, near a place called Glander's Gap. It's a poor story, but I'll tell it to you some day, if you like, when we are riding around."

## XI.

The next few days were spent by the two physicians almost exclusively in each other's society. They rode or drove together on the country doctor's rounds, and talked over old campaigning days and fought over old battles with the keen zest of ex-soldiers. And when this diversion lost savor they diverged to politics, or discussed professional points, with frequent disagreement and great lustiness and heat of argument. Being clever men and gentlemen, they enjoyed each other thoroughly, content to agree or to disagree in good-fellowship.

The souls of women, however, abhor such monopoly: so that on the evening of the third day Dr. Tazewell was pounced upon by his wife and privily rebuked for not allowing his guest greater social opportunities.

"There's Mrs. Lawrence dying to know him," the lady explained. "You know her craze for genealogy. She's discovered that Dr. Guthrie's mother was an Etheridge from Lower Virginia, and she's anxious to find out if she can be of the same family as her brother William's wife, who was also an Etheridge. She sent the judge over to call yes-

terday when you had Dr. Guthrie out. Hugh Donevan came this morning and missed him too. Marian Vandan has been talking him up all over the neighborhood, and getting everybody curious."

"What's she been saying?" queried the doctor. "Guthrie told me he'd met her in New York; but I didn't gather from his tone that they were at all intimate."

"They were not. Her uncle, an ex-army surgeon, is a great friend of Dr. Guthrie's, and has, I fancy, been of service to him. Marian has dined with him twice at her uncle's house. This neighborhood is convinced that he's here on Marian's account. I'm sure of it. She says that he is considered a man of mark in New York, and is an accepted American authority on antiseptic surgery. His reputation bids fair to be international."

"Humph!" grunted the native doctor. "And all the women want to run after him because of that, do they?"

"Not entirely," tranquilly responded his wife. "Your friend is an agreeable man outside of his profession. You certainly seem to have found him so. I'm anxious for Ruth Donevan to meet him."

The doctor's eyes twinkled. "She has met him," he announced, gleefully. "They made acquaintance over Kit Gentry's baby, and must have fallen into depths of intimacy, for he had out his squirt-gun and peppered her with carbolic acid from her head to her heels. Hugh told me. He says when he went to swing his sister down from her horse, and got wind of her, he had to give over gallantry and back off with his nose in his fingers. Never had such rankness greeted him since the wrong sort of animal used to blunder into his rabbit-traps. If you've any match-making ideas, my dear, you'd as well give 'em up. Guthrie has taken every precaution against infection."

Put into excellent humor by relish of his own joke, the doctor yielded handsomely to his wife's suggestion and contrived to throw Guthrie more upon the women for entertainment. They received him with joy and made much of him, straightway inaugurating a round of festivities of which he was the unconscious lion.

He took very well, in spite of being somewhat taciturn in general society, for he was an excellent listener, and when conversation veered to topics in which he was interested his hazel eyes would light up with marvellous brilliancy and that which he said would be forceful and worth listening to. It was in his favor also, with these people, that his mother had been a Virginian. It gave him an authorized place and did away with the necessity for regarding him as "a rank stranger," as Mrs. Wheat put it.

"Come, let's go calling together," suggested Miss Vandan, when the new order of things had been in force several days. "We can have the cart and the roan filly. She's a sensitive lady, and, if insulted with the whip, pauses and kicks feelingly, or bolts into fence-corners and refuses to come out. Driven persuasively, she goes like a bird."

Guthrie looked up lazily. He lay at ease in a hammock, swung where the sun could get at him, but no wind, and had in hand a new magazine in which the articles were clever. He had been calling with Meta Tazewell the previous day.

Miss Vandan caught the edge of the hammock and jiggled it horribly.

"You're speculating as to whether it's worth while," she declared. "And it is. The morning is perfect, and I've lots of interesting things to say, and not a few to do. Don't be unappreciative."

She was a piquant brunette, as dainty as a carnation, and costumed to perfection in forester's green. Her fluffy dark locks were surmounted by a Tyrolese hat ornamented with genuine blackcock feathers, and her saucy dark eyes would have challenged a mummied Pharaoh to flirtation. She was so vivid and emotional that her New England background seemed incongruous, as though a parouet had been nested in a cleft of a granite boulder. In common with the youth of her world, she had boxed, fenced, rowed, and ridden herself into considerable vigor of muscle, so that the razzle-dazzle motion she gave to the hammock was vehement enough to cause Guthrie to capitulate.

"For mercy's sake stop the concern and let me get out," he laughed. "I'm yours—rescue or no rescue. Who taught you the horrible trick? It's worse than a Channel boat in a chopping sea. Where did you learn it?"

"Nowhere!" she glories. "Only I myself have genius enough to invent such a thing. Isn't it awful? I call it my writ of ejection, and never serve it without satisfactory results. Nothing human can stand against it. I'll do it again, if you don't come along! The cart is all ready, and you don't want any more war-paint. You're quite dangerous enough the way you are."

They bowled along merrily, pleased with themselves and with each other. Miss Vandan did most of the talking, for Guthrie had to mind the mare, who went skittishly and as though "blue spirits and gray" were bobbing about in the fence-corners. The road required humoring also, being washed in places, which made it necessary sometimes, in order to secure good going for the wheels, to put the mare in a rut, a proceeding to which she invariably objected.

When they reached the turn-off to the Donevan gates the young lady signified her intention of entering them.

"I'm taking you to the most interesting house in all this interesting region," she declared, enthusiastically: "a house mossed over with tradition and story; a house that has cradled a race for nearly two centuries. I yearn to explore every hole and cranny of it with a great yearning. When the Tazewell girls were little children, Miss Donevan showed them a secret chamber in it somewhere,—a regular bogey-haunt. I'm wild to see it. You go through a concealed door in a closet in Mr. Donevan's room and scramble up a black little ladder-staircase that corkscrews around a chimney, and finally emerge in a cuddly-hole under the eaves. Can you conceive of anything more fascinating?"

Guthrie laughed.

"It suggests the roof prisons of the old Venetians," he said. "I wonder what 'twas built for. It seems a curious thing to be in a Virginia country house. Do they keep dead men's bones in it, or garden-seed?"

"The former, I hope," she responded, cheerfully. "The other would be flat and unprofitable. I like stalwart sensation. There's Miss Donevan on the porch, with her brother."

A shade of difference in tone caused Guthrie to glance aside at his companion. Then, as the mare circled round handsomely, his glance followed hers until it rested on Ruth leaning lightly against one of the tall columns, looking out at them, with her eyes shaded by her uplifted hand.

Hugh Donevan had a litter of month-old puppies out to sun themselves on the grass, and he and the big Irish setter to whom they belonged were rolling them about, playing with them. As the vehicle approached, the big dog, whose organ of duty was large, bounced forward, and barked belligerently; and the wee dogs, with such imitation as was within their compass, squatted in a circle and yapped like mechanical toys.

Hugh stepped forward to help Miss Vandan to alight. He was a handsome man, although well past his youth, and, to use his own phrase, "a trifle moth-eaten about the crown." His manner was cordial and hearty; and he had a way of giving a woman the impression that she was never absent from his thoughts. He was great friends with Miss Vandan, and welcomed her now with *empressment*. Guthrie also was greeted with warmth, and a jovially worded regret that they had missed each other on the occasion of Hugh's call. Then he squired Miss Vandan to the porch and presented Guthrie to his sister.

Ruth disclaimed the necessity. "We spent hours together last week at Kit Gentry's," she said, graciously, extending her hand.

"So you did," acknowledged Hugh. "And in consequence I shall have to ride to windward of you for many moons.—I owe you a grudge, doctor."

Guthrie met the challenge gayly, and the quartette entered the house. In the parlor they paired, Hugh conducting Miss Vandan to a sofa at the far end, while Ruth indicated a couple of arm-chairs beside the hearth-rug to Guthrie. A low fire burned in the fireplace, and the tiny yellow and violet flames leaped up and down, as though playing peep-bo with their own reflections in the brass fire-irons.

"I'm like a cat," Ruth declared, establishing herself. "As soon as the sunshine loses heat I cuddle in to a fire. My brother hoots at me for starting a blaze in October, but I like it."

So did Guthrie, and said so, quoting a dainty little quatrain in support of their mutual taste. Ruth smiled at him appreciatively. After a moment she inquired about the baby.

"He's much better this last day or two," Guthrie said. "Your Mrs. Turner is a wonderful nurse. Her care has really done more for the child than our physie. She has intelligence, and takes an idea as quickly as any one I ever directed. You've heard, of course, that she proposes to take the baby home with her as soon as he is strong enough to be moved. It was her own suggestion, and we closed with it eagerly. It's a lease of life for the child. Tazewell says that woman's maternal instincts are always in feshet."

Ruth smiled with her eyes, while her lips retained their sweet gravity.

"Mrs. Turner is the salt of the earth," she affirmed. "She has mothered half the community, in sickness or trouble. Her own brood of eleven has never seemed to her large enough."

Then they strayed into talk of larger scope,—impersonal talk about literature and art and the world's great happenings. Guthrie, beguiled and stimulated by the genuineness of her interest and sympathy, thrust aside all reserve and surprised even himself by the fluency and scope of his conversation. They were brought back to consciousness of their surroundings by Hugh.

"Is there any objection to my showing Miss Vandan that hole under the roof, Ruth?" he inquired. "The Tazewells have loaded her to the muzzle with blood-and-thunder descriptions. She believes, but is afraid to admit it, that we've an ancestral Indian up there—mummied; or else the blue-coated bones of a Federal."

Ruth rose from her chair.

"You unwise virgin," she smiled, "don't you know stories always shrivel under investigation? All your thrilling sensations are going to disintegrate into dust of eighteen years' accumulation.—Will you come with us," to Guthrie, "and share her disappointment?"

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## XII.

They passed into the hall, and Miss Vandan paused to admire the handsome old stairway, with its broad oaken steps and fine sweep of ascent. She made Hugh tell her of how the carved newel-post and hand-rail had been brought up the river from the seaboard in a plantation flat-boat manned by negroes, and of its being a family tradition that they had been imported from Ireland.

"It's bog-wood, they say, and hand-carved every bit of it," he told her. "The old man of all—here in Virginia, that is—came from Ulster. He was a younger son of Sir John Hugh Donevan of Donevan Heights, near Strabane. Ruth's eyes came with the Irish strain. My brother had them also."

Ruth, attended by Guthrie, stopped in the dining-room for a small hand-lamp and matches.

"It's as dark as Erebus on the ladder," she explained, "and in the cuddy-hole too. It's been years since the skylight was examined, and I suppose it's covered thick with dirt-daubers' nests and cobwebs."

The quartette then proceeded to the sunny south chamber, which for generations had been set apart as the sleeping-apartment of the lady of the manor. It was furnished in the old style with a high-posted bed of mahogany, black with age, testered above and claw-footed below, and so elevated in the plane that, when mattresses and feather bed were added, the little bed-steps, placed conveniently near, were by no means a superfluity. The wardrobe was also a mighty structure, with a chest of drawers, with brass handles, between two



capacious presses. At top it was finished off with mantlings of carved work, with creatures at the four corners that looked to be hoodie-crows roosting. Between the windows was another chest of drawers, surmounted by a narrow swing-glass on a pedestal of its own. There was a fine old mirror, on a larger scale, framed in tarnished gilt, over the mantel, with some quaint chairs and spindle-legged tables which made Miss Vandan's sophisticated mouth water.

Hugh threw open the shutters, letting in a flood of sunlight, which Ruth was too thorough a housekeeper to mind.

"This was my mother's room," he said, glancing about with affection. "Nobody occupies it now. Ruth won't consent to be on the upper floor alone. She's afraid of Miss Vandan's mummied Indian."

The impressible Northern girl let the allusion pass without comment, and glanced about wistfully. "It was here you were born?" she questioned, lifting her eyes to him. And when Hugh had assented, her glance sought the bed, and her voice sank to a whisper in the additional inquiry, "Your mother—was it here likewise she solved the eternal mystery?"

Hugh shook his head. "After my father's death she had to be taken up-stairs," he explained. "This room was too full of associations. She could neither rest nor sleep in it. You may have heard that she was ill for several years before her death. My brother Jack died there," indicating the bed. "When the Yankees were raiding about this region in the winter of '64, Jack was detailed for some secret-service work on our side,—carrying despatches across the mountains to Stuart. The enemy were pretty lively and enterprising, so Jack was pursued and fired on. He got away, being more familiar with the country than were the raiders, but he'd a troublesome lot of United States lead in him, and after a while he got dazed from loss of blood. Then his horse—old Hawkeye—took control of the situation and brought him home. The last time my mother was in this room she was brought down in a chair to say farewell to poor Jack."

Guthrie, standing nearest the bed, put out his hand and gently stroked the pillow. His eyes were introspective and brooding. In his past were many incidents as pitiful as the one just touched on, but somehow this seemed to separate itself from the mass of experience and take form and value of its own. His thoughts seemed coerced back into the old time, and his busy intellectual life of the present shrivelled aside. Half-forgotten chords in his memory began faintly to vibrate. As his hand touched the pillow he felt as though taking leave of a comrade.

Only Ruth noticed his preoccupation, and some quality in it pleased her.

The chimney jutted into the room to an unusual depth, giving space on either side for very deep closets, or rather small dressing-rooms, which were lighted by gable-end windows. Hugh opened the door of one of these, and threw wide the shutters.

"This was my father's dressing-room," he remarked. "My mother used the other. Ruth keeps household plunder in it now, I believe. In the old days people had a fad about its being unsafe to have wall

timbers come in contact with the chimney. In some old houses there is a narrow passage behind the chimney connecting the dressing-rooms. The safety space is here just the same, but it's fixed up in different shape."

Instead of plastering, the little room was finished with panelled wainscoting of walnut, which timber had formerly been abundant enough in Virginia to be used for fence-rails. Hugh opened his knife and pressed the point of the blade into a groove in the ornamentation, slipping it along until he met with an obstacle, when he jammed the blade home and bore down on it.

Miss Vandan kept her eyes fixed on his movements, thrilling deliciously.

"At last! at last!" she murmured, ecstatically, "I am mixed up with something romantic. Mr. Donevan, if you'll let me wriggle that knife, I'll love you forever. The most horribly agreeable tingles are pulsing all through me."

The others laughed at her enthusiasm, and Hugh gave place. "There's a jangle to be said while you work it," he observed, gravely, but with laughter in his eyes, and straightway invented an uncanny bit of doggerel to suit the situation. While Miss Vandan was repeating it, he closed his hand over hers and gave the knife a lurch to the left. The panel moved sufficiently for him to get his hand through and push it aside into the wall.

The girl leaned forward into the aperture.

"It's so dark," she protested. "I can see nothing except a shadowy, frame-like thing in the middle."

"That's all there is to see," Ruth responded. "It's the stairway,—or rather the ladder. You must be careful, Miss Vandan: the steps are only flattened bars of iron. Let the men go first with the light. And be careful of your pretty gown. It must be horribly dusty."

She drew her own gray skirts about her, although they were well-nigh as plain and close-fitting as a habit.

Miss Vandan had no time for such paltry considerations as clothes. She was engaged in the first romantic incident she had encountered in the South, and the zeal of the investigator was hers. The space left between the chimney and outer wall was occupied by a clumsy spiral staircase, made evidently by a native pattern. The central pillar was of hand-hewn oak, and the steps, as Ruth had said, were iron bars, doubtless wrought in a plantation smithy. They were set at longer intervals than is quite comfortable for women, and the ascent had to be made with sufficient agility and caution to satisfy even the insatiable New Englander. Just below the peak of the gable, beside a small Catherine-wheel window, the spiral ended in a rough platform from which a door opened into a low attic right under the ridge-pole. The roof sloped to the floor, so that even in the centre space a tall man could not stand upright, and the rafters were covered with a thin boarding of undressed plank. The flooring was solid, and the cuddy was divided from the rest of the attic spaces by a brick partition. It was lighted by a small skylight, now so obstructed by dirt and spiders' webs as to admit only a ghastly pallor. Ventilation appeared to have been

unprovided for. Altogether it was an apartment which could commend itself only to a political refugee or a fugitive from justice.

"What do you suppose 'twas built for?" Guthrie demanded. "As far as perceptible, it has no *raison d'être*. That corkscrew precludes all idea of its having been intended as a place of storage."

"I don't know," replied Hugh. "The old Irishman was eccentric, or, at all events, left that reputation behind him. This may be simply an evidence of it. The idea of secret hiding-places was common to his time, however, and this house was well away to the frontier when it was built. There is something very like this in tide-water Virginia, I'm told."

"A good place this in war-time," remarked Guthrie. "Didn't you find it so?"

"Capital! Then the old eccentric's descendants arose and blessed him for building better than he knew. Our silver and other valuables banked up here during most of the war. And for four days and nights I squatted here also and hearkened to the sounds of Federal revelry below.—No," as Miss Vandan demanded the story, "I won't tell. In your thought you've maligned a most innocent family. You ought to be falling into *mea culpa* attitudes, instead of shamelessly clamoring for more amusement. Where's the horror you came to seek?"

"What's that?" demanded the young lady, pointing to a dark object close under the eaves.

"Old sheep-skins," responded Hugh, promptly. "The fugitive's humble couch."

"Nonsense!" she laughed. "The sheep-skins are there behind your sister. I started to stir them up with my foot a moment ago, but a mouse squeaked and scuttled, so I let them alone. I've no sympathy with mice. The thing yonder looks like a long box."

Ignoring Ruth's statement that it was an old ship's locker and quite empty, both men fell to teasing, each outdoing the other in horrid suggestion. She had best be satisfied with the situation in its present shape, they declared, and withdraw decently, or the disasters consequent on misdirected curiosity would certainly overwhelm her.

But the representative of New England scorned intimidation, and felt herself equal to anything the South might have to show. She turned her back scornfully upon her tormentors,—a thing hard to do with the body out of plumb,—possessed herself of the lamp, and advanced upon her quest.

As she squatted down beside it, deposited the lamp on the floor, and laid her hand on the lid, the men, as though moved by the same demon, gave vent simultaneously to an eddying, unearthly howl, and shuffled about with their feet. Miss Vandan crouched like a partridge, but held herself from other manifestations of dismay, nor did she take her hand from the locker. Ruth, smothering her laughter, crossed over to her.

"It's a shame of those wretches," she said. "They startled me, too, and I was standing looking at them. Let me help you open the locker. The lid is heavy. There is nothing in it."

She was mistaken. On the metal of the old sea-lining lay a soft hat of Confederate gray, looped up at one side with tiny crossed bayonets.

Ruth lifted it tenderly, turning it about in her hand. How came it in that place, she wondered, hidden away and forgotten all these long years? Her eyes filled, and her lips quivered. She moved back beside her brother.

"It's Jack's," she whispered. "You must have left it up here that time you were in hiding."

The Northern girl closed the lid gently, avoiding all noise. She felt suddenly aloof from these people, set apart in speechless alienation. These contrasts made life real—and terrible. The light died out of her piquant face, leaving it grave and remorseful. Then, being a warm-hearted woman, she made of sympathy a bridge whereby to return to her companions.

Rejoining the others, she laid her hand gently on Ruth's shoulder. "Forgive me," she said. "I was wrong, and these reminders are cruel. I'm more grieved than I can tell you. Let us come away."

Below, Ruth remained behind to replace the panel, and Guthrie stopped with her. He watched her curiously, noting every curve of her figure, every line of her face. His brows were contracted, and so great was his absorption that when a question was put to him he returned no answer. He was like an actor slowly recovering a forgotten part and on the *qui vive* for a cue, or a musician thrilled with fragmentary harmonies awaiting the sounding of the note which shall marshal all else into place.

When they re-entered the chamber they found the other couple standing on the hearth-rug, Hugh talking earnestly, and the girl listening with her face uplifted and her eyes full of reflex emotion.

"That old time, to me, is simply history," she observed, gently. "I came into the world since; and no member of my family suffered. It is only through sympathy that I can realize the pain for both sides. Do you resemble your brother?"

"Not at all," Hugh assured her. "Jack and Ruth were alike,—very much alike. This is how my brother looked."

And, before Ruth could divine his intention, Hugh had taken the dead soldier's hat from her hand and placed it upon her head.

The pupils of Guthrie's eyes dilated widely, then contracted to a mere point. He had his cue.

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### XIII.

During the drive homeward, Guthrie and his companion talked little, and only upon topics disconnected with the *dénouement* of their visit. Their previous acquaintance, albeit slight, now that they had come together again in a new place, assumed fictitious value, and appeared to invest them with the privileges of friendship, chief among which is liberty to be silent upon occasion without giving offence. The thoughts of each were busy with the incidents through which

they had passed, the woman's a trifle wistfully, those of the man with exultation.

This re-establishment of connection between his past and present delighted Guthrie, and he reviewed the situation with interest. Through the days which had elapsed since his return to Virginia, he could trace the growth of suggestion into renewal of association, which had culminated in recognition of fact. It had been subtle and orderly, all of it, and, in retrospect, was enjoyable for its very simplicity.

"She'd have more trouble in shaking off Coral Garnet's identity now, if it were fastened upon her," he ruminated. "Age has increased the likeness. I knew she resembled somebody I'd seen before, the instant I saw her on the porch in that gray gown, with her hand up. It was a common gesture with the handsome old scout. That story about Jack rang familiar likewise, but I'd have been a good bit longer straightening the whole thing out if Hugh hadn't put the hat on her. Then Coral Garnet flashed back upon me, and with her the other thing. Lord, how odd it all is! 'Twas bound to come, sooner or later. Ever since I set foot in this blessed land of enchantment again I've been haunted, so to speak, by the reflex of things lying just beyond consciousness. If it had gone on I might have tried metempsychosis for an explanation, on the ground that second-hand souls must be subject to recognition of spiritual environment; or I might have come down heavy on my liver, which is perfectly guiltless. But neither process would have satisfied me, as an ultimate. Nothing would, except the verity."

He made a break in his cogitations to do a skilful bit of driving over a bridge of infirm constitution, and to address an inconsequent observation to his companion. While she responded, his thoughts strayed away again:

"It's curious how familiar she seemed from the first. Out yonder in that cabin we seemed to fit in somehow, and to-day it was as though we belonged. Lord, how I used to castle-build for her up yonder at Fort Delaware! And to come upon her accidentally, after all these years, when I'd stopped thinking about her at all! It's marvellous; and if another fellow should mention such a happening to me I'd ask to look at his tongue. The gibbering and finger-pointing stage of delirium would seem right at hand."

"I wonder what's kept her single," he mused on, more slowly. "It seems unnatural for an attractive woman like her. Could it be——? That old wonder-witch was held to be potent in her day and generation, and she was my many times great-grandam. Pshaw! what folly! Necromancy is humbug, and belief in it crass ignorance. Still, I'd just like to know if she has the old wonder-witch. I'd like to know, too, whether she ever thinks of me at all, or of our pretty little adventure. But that leaf in memory is torn out long ago, I expect, or glued down with disgust. As long as I didn't find her, how is she to know that I came back and hunted according to my promise? To her I must be a recreant of eighteen years' standing."

After Ruth's departure from the Federal camp, years before, word had come in that the detachment of Confederate cavalry they had

hoped to intercept had crossed the mountains by another gap, deflected, and formed a junction with the larger force for the protection of the railway. All reason for holding Glander's Gap being at an end, and the place itself being of no strategic value, the Federal regiment in occupation had hastened to withdraw and rejoin its command. Captain Guthrie (as he then was) had been forwarded to a dépôt where were other prisoners, and with them had been sent North to Fort Delaware.

From his youth up, Guthrie had been accustomed to an active open-air life, so that captivity was specially horrible to him. The knowledge that, save within the narrowest limits, he was no longer his own master drove him frantic, and, after eight weeks of vain kicking against the pricks, he fretted himself into prison fever, and had to be taken to hospital. Here he was fortunate enough to be under the professional charge of a Dr. Vandan, a New-Yorker, who had once been engaged to a Southern woman. The lady had died ere she could be wedded, but her memory still served to soften the heart of her whilom lover to such luckless wights as spoke to him with the once-loved inflections.

For Guthrie Dr. Vandan conceived a particular liking, and after the fever was subdued would talk to him as man to man. Their tastes were similar, and likewise their aspirations, for all of Guthrie's longing was for the profession of medicine, and he openly averred that when the necessity for marring men should cease he would devote himself heart and soul to mending them. During his weeks of convalescence Dr. Vandan supplied him with books, got a permit for him to hang about the dispensary, and even went the length of lecturing to him in the wards.

Ruth's general, meanwhile, had been mindful of his promise, chuckling admiringly whenever he thought of her supposed love-adventure. A spirited lassie like that deserved the lover of her choice, he declared, even though that choice were misdirected to rebels. When, therefore, exchange of prisoners was resumed, after one of the temporary suspensions, Guthrie was among the first batch of invalided Confederates sent South.

Battles had been fought, won, and lost, the season had progressed, and troubles had thickened. Stuart, the flower of Southern chivalry, lay at rest in Hollywood Cemetery, and disaster stood ready to crowd on the heels of disaster. There was no question of sick-leave for Guthrie. Every man who could sit straight in the saddle, or stand upright with a gun, was wanted in the field. In the stress of demand from a nation sore pressed, there was no time for the redemption of individual pledges. Guthrie rejoined his regiment at once, and remained with it, in active service, through the weary, heart-sickening weeks of lessening hope and growing despair, and with it made that last sorrowful march which ended at Appomattox.

In prison, the sweet eyes of the girl to whom he had given his pledge haunted him, and he encouraged thought of her with romantic fervor. But when the overthrow came of his hopes and his cause, he had no heart for anything save to creep back to his home, like a wounded stag to covert.



It was nearly two years after the encounter with Ruth before Guthrie found himself in a position to set about redeeming his promise. Eighteen months after the close of the war he returned to Virginia, revisited Glander's Gap, and, taking that for a pivotal point, searched the country around for a tall, slender girl, with Irish blue eyes, and a resemblance to the famous Confederate spy, Coral Garnet, when equipped with a soldier's slouch hat.

With such slender data it is not wonderful that his search should have resulted in nothing. He had forgotten the young lady's name,—if indeed he had heard it,—and also the direction whence she had come, and the distance. The idea of extending his radius of search thirty miles never entered his mind. Nor did it occur to him that girls did not habitually appear in men's hats, or that his own ring might not be kept all the time in evidence.

Giving up the search, he returned to Georgia, where a way was unexpectedly opened for his ambition. An uncle, who had been fortunate enough to get cotton through the blockade and so come out of the war relatively solvent, offered to loan him money for the medical course in Paris. Guthrie closed with the offer, went abroad, and for years devoted himself to the acquisition of his profession. Ruth's image, at first, would return to him now and then; but the life of a medical student, particularly that of one cumbered with a necessity for making ends meet, is not conducive to sentiment: so the pretty little romance he had constructed about their one meeting gradually resolved into the glamour from which it had been evolved.

While in Paris, Guthrie was so fortunate as to renew acquaintance with Dr. Vandan, and it was through his influence that the Georgian finally returned to America and assumed charge of a New York hospital.

Now that chance had brought Ruth again across his path, and he felt the renewed charm of her presence, Guthrie was dissatisfied with himself in that he had abandoned search so easily. It seemed to him that a woman like Ruth should have been sought more diligently, for a greater length of time, and over a larger area. He felt that she had not had justice done her, and that, if she remembered him at all, it must be as a sorry fellow and a promise-breaker.

This view of the case filled him with such perturbation that he broke away from it, and took refuge in the hope that she numbered him among the victims of war. Better, far better, fill a soldier's grave, in her thought, than pose before her as a recreant,—at least, until he should have carried their present acquaintance to a point where he could afford to live and justify himself.

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#### XIV.

When a man begins to deprecate a woman's judgment of him, and make plans about her, he docket his case, and, with time and opportunity for counsel, may hope ultimately to hear it called in court. Guthrie's interest was aroused and his curiosity piqued. His initial

wonderment as to whether Ruth remembered the young soldier and retained his ring grew like Jonah's gourd, shooting forth branches and leaves of desire and suggestion until it bade fair to overshadow, for the moment, all else. He yearned with colossal yearning to find out about it all, but was held back from the direct method of discovery by *amour-propre*. He must make good his standing with her before taking risks. He began to seek her persistently, but unobtrusively, paying her numberless little attentions, and studying her habits, tastes, and inclinations with the eager deference a man insensibly yields to the woman of his choice.

The neighborhood, having decided that Dr. Guthrie was in Virginia on Marian Vandan's account, could see nothing else, and, behind his back, spoke of him unreservedly as the Northern girl's lover, so that as regarded Ruth he was really at other and greater disadvantage than he knew. Miss Vandan herself vaguely suspected something of the sort, but as yet could do nothing to disabuse the public, not being quite sure of her ground, and lacking opportunity because of her own strangerhood and the delicate reserve maintained in regard to the supposed love-affair by those around her. Her instinctive sympathy had caused the girl to penetrate to the arcana of the situation from the first, and the fact that Dr. Guthrie was falling in love with Ruth Donevan was patent to her long before knowledge of his condition was borne in on the lover himself. She aided and abetted him shamelessly, hoping so to put matters on a proper footing, for she had reasons of her own for not wishing to pose as a *fiancée*.

Mrs. Tazewell, now fully imbued with the general impression, and minded to give the supposed lover every possible chance which propinquity and country suggestiveness could afford him, caused her husband to second her in extending the original invitation.

"There is no need for your returning North so soon," she affirmed, "for you told me yourself that your hospital corps was most efficient and reliable. Stay with us longer, and have some more hunting. All work and no play is disastrous, and, from your own confession, you've had precious little real holiday."

Guthrie accepted with an avidity which delighted her. Like all happily married women, she was an inveterate match-maker, and was never so blissful as when she fancied herself godmothering some *affaire de cœur*.

"It's so pretty to watch them," she declared to Ruth Donevan. "Dr. Guthrie, of course, is dreadfully in love with Marian, and I do all I can to throw them together. It would be a splendid match for him, and she's a most lovable girl. Then, apart from natural prejudice in their favor, I must say that Southern men *do* make satisfactory husbands. If I didn't think so I wouldn't take the responsibility of helping on the match, for I am fond of Marian."

Ruth smiled a little. She had never known the time when there were not good and sufficient reasons, in Mrs. Tazewell's sight, for her helping on most matches.

"Is Miss Vandan in love with him?" she inquired, for, while reserved with the stranger within their gates, these Virginians were can-

dor itself with each other. Ruth had a reason for asking, moreover, for she had noticed certain signs and wonders in Hugh's behavior of late, and knew that he admired the piquant brunette more than a little. Her sisterly instincts were on the alert, for she had no mind that Hugh should come to grief unadvisedly. She regarded Mrs. Tazewell with compelling eyes.

The elder lady tranquilly picked up a stitch in her knitting. "That I can't determine," she admitted. "Marian admires Dr. Guthrie, I know, but she's a reserved girl under all her *bonhomie*, so if there are deeper feelings she keeps them hidden. I asked Meta her opinion, but she just laughed. You know how girls stand by one another. It will be a match, I expect. All the neighborhood says so."

Of this Ruth was well aware, for even Mrs. Wheat had informed her, when down the mountain on one of her poultry-selling expeditions, that "Mis' Tazewell's Yankee an' her beau war co'tin' consid'r'ble rounst erbout ther ole mill-pond. Jim Bryant had seed 'em a-settin', cheek by jowl, 'pon an over-retchin' log, so slippery an' slantin' that a 'ooman fishin' from it war liable to have to be *hilt* any minute."

Mrs. Wheat's informant had neglected to add that Meta Tazewell had also occupied the log, and even more precariously than her friend, and that Byrd Tazewell, an urchin of five, the instigator of the expedition, had literally fished from Guthrie's shoulder. Too great attention to detail is, by many narrators, held utterly to ruin a story.

At first Ruth had given ear to the general impression with the casual interest usually accorded the affairs of pleasant acquaintances, but later her own attitude towards Guthrie had changed. His attentions to herself were sufficiently marked to cause her uneasiness and the underlying consciousness that all was not as it should be. He attracted her more than any man she had ever been thrown with; the brilliance of his intellect and his strong personality, moreover, thrilled her with a subtle instinct of special congeniality, and she was haunted by that mysterious recognition of affinity, or of previous acquaintance, which comes to most of us at times, and is one of the things of heaven, or earth, unexplained of our philosophy. Ruth made no effort at explanation; she simply pondered over it in her heart, while her manner to Guthrie lapsed, in fine gradation, from cordial, frank friendliness into an alluring and impulsive aloofness, intermittent in its manifestation, but unquestionably certain in its result. Under it Guthrie's feeling for her deepened and strengthened marvellously; his desire was stimulated, and every particle of persistence within him aroused.

With Miss Vandan Ruth's manner also underwent gradual change: she grew cold and ceremonious with the girl, holding her at arm's length and to the courtesies of casual acquaintanceship. To herself she gave as explanation her sisterly anxiety about Hugh, and also held it for justification.

Matters were in this complication when Guthrie rode over alone one afternoon to the Donevans' to call. He had not seen Ruth for a couple of days, and at their last meeting had found her elusive and unsatisfactory. She baffled him, and, being a masterful man, he chafed under it and was minded to throw prudence to the winds and establish for

himself some sort of claim by disclosure of their previous acquaintance. His unrest had revealed his love to him, and to the finest fibre of his being he was conscious that for him Ruth Donevan was the pearl without price, the woman whom he wanted for his wife. With this revelation came Love's twin sister Humility and took up her abode with him, holding before him a mirror in which seemed depicted every one of his imperfections, with mighty little to offset them, so that at times he got low in his mind and Ruth's treatment of him looked like evidence of superior wisdom. After which his natural sturdiness would reassert itself with the counter-declaration that, as men went, he was not an unmitigatedly bad lot, and even that Ruth might go farther and fare worse.

Once the thought crossed him that Ruth might have identified him as readily as he had identified her, and that resentment of his supposed negligence of long ago might be the cause of her growing constraint. Under the influence of this idea he examined his own countenance in a mirror, and was fain to admit that time and a beard had made for him an effectual disguise.

That she might consider him another woman's lover never entered his mind.

The trees and shrubberies about the lawn were denuded of foliage, so that the view of the front and sides of the house was unobstructed. As he cantered up the drive-way, Guthrie saw Ruth, without wrap or head-covering, spring from a side porch and set off in the direction of the orchard at a swift run. Her head was bent, and her arms held close, so that it flashed through him that she must be in stress of some sort and husbanding her strength. As she swung herself lightly over the orchard fence the sunlight flashed from something metallic she held in her hand. Considerably mystified, Guthrie quickened his pace, with intent to take a hand in any happening which might be in progress. At the porch Ruth's old nurse, now sufficiently recovered to hobble on crutches, met him in a panic.

"Fur de Lawd's sake, doctor, follow dat chile!" she screamed out to him, too excited to waste time in social formalities. "Dat fool nigger boy Tony jus' now come an' tole her dat Mr. Spence's gray stallion was fightin' ole Hawkeye in de paster beyant de orchard. Stead o' him gwine to de low-grounds arter Mars' Hugh, he had to lippety-click to de house an' blate out to we-all. An' dat chile done got a pistol an' run off to help Hawkeye. Ride arter her, doctor—an' don't you loss a minute."

Guthrie was in no need of urging. The thought of the woman he loved in the presence of an enraged stallion turned him sick. He put the roan filly into a run, mechanically taking the direction indicated by the old woman. He could see Ruth ahead, between the rows of apple-trees, running at speed and making for the pasture-fence. The wind brought to him the vicious squeals of the fighting beasts. He put the filly at the fence, which she took like a bird, and sent her along between the tree-rows at racing speed. In a moment he was alongside of Ruth and bending over from the saddle with a white face and coercive eyes.

"Are you mad?" he demanded. "Give me that pistol at once, and go back to the house. I'll attend to this thing."

Ruth looked up at him mutinously.

"Spence's stallion is in there," she panted. "He must be shot, or he'll kill Hawkeye. They are fighting now! Don't you hear them? Spence has been warned time and again about the brute. He must be shot at once."

"Very well," Guthrie answered. "Leave the thing to me. I'll attend to it."

He took the pistol from her and straightened himself in the saddle. Ruth watched him gallop away, erect and soldierly, and felt an unexplained thrill of pride in him. Instead of returning to the house as she had been bidden, she followed him slowly, and climbed up on the stout rail fence which separated the orchard from the pasture-land.

In the open space beyond, an unequal battle was raging. Old Hawkeye, his glossy hide defaced and stained with earth and blood, his nostrils spume-flecked and dilated, and his eyes flashing with a fury-born renewal of youthful fire, was defending himself as best he might, with hoofs and teeth, against the onslaught of a furious gray stallion. The earth was churned up by the trampling hoofs and literally beaten to mire, for there had been rain the previous night. The stallion circled and wheeled about his victim, advancing and retreating in sudden swift bounds. Ruth's heart sickened with apprehension as she watched the brute's manoeuvres. Even from a distance she could see that Hawkeye's age was beginning to tell.

"Hurry! oh, hurry!" she wailed out to Guthrie, wringing her hands with excitement.

The stallion drew aside and gathered himself together wickedly. His eyes, from red-rimmed sockets, flamed with fury. His silken tail floated behind him like a banner, and his silvery sides pumped in and out with the strain of his effort. His lips were drawn back from his great yellow teeth, and frothed at the corners, and his voice rang out in a squeal that was like a demoniac clarion. With a swift upward heave of his body, he reared and lunged forward, aiming to strike his adversary full on the back with his trampling fore-feet. The old horse, gathering his remaining strength, leaped aside, and as he did so the sharp crack of a revolver bit through the air. The stallion reared upward again with a wild scream of pain, and fell over upon his side.

Guthrie, the pistol in his hand still smoking, and the filly plunging and protesting at every step, rode up and dismounted. It had been a clean shot, from behind the shoulder, and the bullet had buried itself in the animal's heart. The gray limbs twitched a little, and stretched, and the wickedness of the red-rimmed eyes faded behind the death-film.

Old Hawkeye, with the instinctive terror of blood and death many animals show, had trotted away to a distance, and stood trembling, with his crest lowered. Guthrie pocketed the pistol and went over to him, his own horse curvetting and straining away from him to the limit of her rein.

Ruth had scrambled down into the field and run forward the instant she saw the stallion fall. She joined Guthrie now, full of

anxiety for the old horse, who, with dirt and contusions, seemed in sorry enough plight.

"Is he very badly hurt?" she inquired.

For answer Guthrie knotted up the filly's rein and let her go. Her agitation was a clog on his movements. Then he turned to Ruth and extended his hand with a smile.

"You gave me a terrible fright just now, Miss Donevan," he said. "The idea of your tackling that brute yonder turns me sick even now. What possessed you to attempt it?"

"Jack's horse was in danger," she replied, simply, uplifting to him her beautiful eyes. "It may seem silly to you, Dr. Guthrie, but I felt that if anything should happen to Hawkeye it would be like the death of a friend. It *would* be the death of a friend," she amended, "for when Jack got his summons old Hawkeye took care of him and brought him home to us to die."

Guthrie could understand this: he had loved his own war-horse. He watched Ruth sympathetically as she put her arms about Hawkeye's neck and drew his head against her bosom. Suddenly the love in his heart glowed up to his eyes, and burned like a great conflagration. Ruth, moved by some subtle attraction to look up at him, felt her own heart leap in recognition of that which she saw, and then flutter tumultuously in response. Her eyes veiled themselves beneath her curled lashes, and her hands about the horse's neck trembled.

Guthrie's eyes expanded, burning still with full fire. He laid a hand over hers with a swift, masterful movement of possession. Words thronged to his lips, but before he could utter them the sound of men's voices smote on his ear. Hugh Donevan, accompanied by a couple of negroes and a stout, middle-aged white man with an obstinate jaw, was crossing the field.

"It's Mr. Spence," Ruth explained. "He must have been looking for his horse. He's been warned by the entire neighborhood that if the brute broke out again it would be shot. No fence will turn him, and he's so vicious all the negroes are afraid to meddle with him. Last year he injured stock for several people. I'm glad he is dead,—that you shot him!"

So was Guthrie. His hand fell to his side, and his eyes darkened. He felt cut off at the root, so to speak, and was viciously conscious of a desire to serve the owner as he had already served the property. He watched Ruth a moment, as she hurried away, and then joined the group of men beside the dead animal, in good shape to be aggressive, and even belligerent, should an altercation arise.

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## XV.

That night Ruth brooded long over her fire. An element had come into her life the force and fervor of which gave her pause. She could not analyze or understand it, at first, far less cope with it. She could only wonder over it with a sweet, quiescent wonder that was akin to reverence. Once before Love had touched her, brushing her soul, so to speak,



with his wing in the passing. When she had looked in the young soldier's eyes, after the success of their stratagem, the admiration she had seen there depicted had made her heart stir, softly, restlessly, like a young bird in the nest when dawn is at hand. For months she had worn his ring, on a ribbon, inside her dress, and after the close of the war she had expected him for a while with many romantic flutterings of anticipation. When month following month had rolled into years, she had grown to hold him as one dead, and had glorified him into a hero, after the manner of women. She had laid his ring away, but looked at it often, and in her heart had made a sweet shrine for his memory.

Since then men had loved her, but without evoking other response than liking or friendship. Once or twice, all else being equal, she had honestly made an effort to return in kind affection bestowed on her, but her failure had been so complete that she had come to count love an involuntary passion, eccentric in its visitations. Despite her impulsive and warmly sympathetic nature, the citadel of her life had seemed uplifted in a very enchantment of isolation.

From the *mariage de convenance* she had always been held by clean, true womanhood.

And now that all barriers were overthrown, that love at last had entered as a conquering host, she was for the moment powerless for aught save tense realization of its force and sweetness, and instinctive recognition that the new emotion differed from the old only in degree, and as infancy may differ from vigorous maturity.

This likeness in difference gave her strange peace and security, as though a value long promised had suddenly been rendered into her hands. Her eyes smiled, as they brooded, and beyond Guthrie's tall figure and thoughtful face, in shadowy outline, she seemed vaguely conscious of the soldier to her so long dead.

Influenced by this impression, and with some fanciful, womanish notion of linking her past to her present, she half rose from her seat and unlocked a tiny cupboard in the side of the chimney-piece, and took from its nest in soft jeweller's cotton the ring which the Confederate had given her.

It was a curious bauble, of hand-hammered gold, almost as red as copper, and seemed heavy and clumsy for the hand of a woman. About the signet-stone and around the band itself ran an inscription, clearly traced in strange barbaric characters, which Ruth knew to be neither ancient Greek nor Arabic and so had come to consider Egyptian. The signet-stone was likewise mysteriously suggestive and baffling. It was of a dull red substance, curiously threaded with veins of a darker hue, fine-grained as agate or cornelian, but differing from both in essential particulars. It was heart-shaped, not conventionally, but really,—a tiny *fac-simile* of the vital organ. Deep in its outer side was cut the representation of an old, old woman, in barbaric costume, poring, with accentuating finger, over a sibylline scroll. And so exquisite was the workmanship that under a powerful lens the tiny figure would stand out instinct with vigor and portent. A wonder-worker she seemed, intent or adream over some marvellous formula.

The spell of the ring had held Ruth ever since it came into her possession, exciting her imagination with its cabalistic suggestions and tormenting her with its well-preserved secret. That the trinket was an antique and had a history she knew, because of the Confederate's promise. "I'll tell the story of the ring when I return," he had said. But there had been no return, and she herself was without knowledge of matters occult, or opportunity of access to scholars or lapidists, so that for her the pledge had remained mystery-enshrouded and therefore seductive and enchainning. The vanished soldier had been wise with the wisdom of insight when he had placed in the hands of an imaginative girl a pledge of such enthralling quality.

Ruth toyed with the ring semi-consciously, slipping it on and off her fingers. For once its influence was in abeyance and her handling of it was mechanical. The past had receded, and the present was dominant. Her gaze was on the fire, which burned redly at heart, but with top-hamper of yellow and violet flame where the logs were but partially ignited. Guthrie's face was before her, with love-light in the eyes; Guthrie's voice was in her ears, tender with love-cadences; and upon her fingers she could feel the strong touch of his hand. Her own eyes lighted softly, and the warm blood surged from her heart to her forehead; she lifted her fingers and laid her lips to them.

As she did so, the ring slipped from her lap and rolled on the hearth-rug. The hot light of the fire fell on it, reflecting itself, and causing the bauble to glow like a live coal. Ruth watched it idly, a smile of appreciation of its beauty upon her curved lips.

Suddenly a thought swept into her mind, like a night-bird into a festive chamber, and circled there, turning light into darkness with the fierce beat of its wings. She started erect with a half-strangled moan; the breath seemed caught from her lips, and her heart wrenched by the grip of a merciless hand.

She had forgotten Miss Vandan.

For a moment she stood like one stunned, and then began to pace the room restlessly. Her mind was a tumult of emotions: anger, jealousy, love, and awakened perception joined forces and warred. And in the vanguard came inquiry. How had this thing come about? Who was to blame for it? That she, Ruth Donevan, should be madly, utterly in love with the betrothed of another woman seemed horrible. That another woman's betrothed should love her—for in her soul she felt that Guthrie *did* love her—seemed equally horrible. Whose honor had failed? Whose loyalty had been at fault? Or was it all a terrible happening for which nobody could be held accountable, one of those sudden emotional cataclysms, unexpected and overwhelming, which can occur spiritually as well as materially? Who could tell where the blame lay, or whether there was blame?

She walked up and down with her face white and her hands wrung together, suffering bitterly and unnecessarily because of the positive assertions of a set of misinformed gossips. She never thought of doubting the neighborhood's decision, nor of questioning its penetration. From the hour of his arrival Guthrie had been accredited to Miss Vandan.

What must be done about it? She sucked in her breath sharply, and the grip on her heart seemed to tighten and turn. She must go away for a while, and remain away until Dr. Guthrie and Marian Vandan should both have returned to New York. It would be pain, almost agony; but the Donevans had ever been a dauntless race.

In her unrest she went to the window and opened it, glad of the biting kiss of the keen night wind upon cheek and forehead. She leaned out to it, as to the embrace of a lover, and under its strong caress her brain cleared, and things slowly assumed relation and proportion. Her going must be simple and natural, an arrangement which would justify itself on face value. A letter received the previous afternoon gave her just the opening needed. A relative of her mother's, an elderly maiden lady who lived beyond Glander's Gap, had written complaining of loneliness and entreating Ruth for a visit. Already the subject had been mooted to Hugh, and she could easily persuade him to take her up to Miss Randolph's on horseback. Once there, she could remain for a long or short visit as suited her.

The breath of the night grew sharp with frost atoms, and strong with a reinforcement of north wind. The stars shone from immeasurable distance, with a cold, white glimmer. There was no moon, and the face of the earth was hidden.

Ruth closed the window. The fire had burned down to a dull glow which hardly reached the hearth-rug. She crouched down beside it and stretched out her hands, winter-touched in body and soul. The ring caught her notice: she picked it up and slipped it on her finger, with a smile sadder than tears. Her misapprehension of the whole situation was so real that it seemed to her that misfortune had waited on both her love-ventures. In Love's territory she appeared without heritage whereon to erect a heart-home.

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## XVI.

The afternoon following the horse-fight, Dr. Guthrie, like the hero of the nursery ballad, attired himself in his best and set forth to make his devoir to his lady. A nineteenth-century wardrobe falls short of supplying "rosemary clothes" and a periwig for true love's adornment, but even without these adjuncts it was a handsome and gay cavalier who passed through the Donevan gate-way and cantered along the drive. And it was more than a pity that Ruth should not have been there to see, instead of away in the forest, making seven honest miles to the hour, on her way up to the farm beyond Glander's Gap.

Finding her gone was a terrible set-back to Guthrie. He had made up his mind to put certain matters before her, and the possibility of being denied the opportunity of so doing had never entered his mind. He was fully aware of the custom Virginians have of unpremeditated flitting, hither and yon, to spend days and nights among kindred, and the practice had never seemed reprehensible to him until now. When a man has definitely made up his mind to put his fortune to the touch it irritates him to be balked at the outset; and this was practically the

second time within a few hours that Guthrie had had the words halted upon his lips. It was hard on him, for he was a man who took opposition unkindly, and he got into a very bad temper about it.

He interviewed mammy with some sharpness, but made little by it, the old woman suavely declaring, what was the truth, that her mistress's movements were uncertain. She "mout be gone a fortnight, or she mout be back mos' any time. Her ma's cousin was mighty po'ly an' had sount for her." This was the sum and substance of what he learned, with the trifling additions that Hugh would return the following day, and that the abode of the incapacitated relation was situated "beyant de mountain."

There is a disconcerting futility about a retreat with loaded guns from a place where prowess was intended. Guthrie felt it so, as he trotted away, and consequently waxed more and more unamiable. When the roan filly shied prettily at a fluttering leaf, instead of the usual "Sho, lady! gently," he dealt her a rap between the ears, accompanied by a tweak of the reins, which astonished her.

Even had he wished to do so, Guthrie could not in reason accuse Ruth of eluding him through coquetry. In the first place, he had no tangible ground for supposing that his present state of mind was known to her; and in the second, she had never impressed him as the sort of woman to resort to strategy.

He accepted the natural explanation of her departure, as Ruth had intended he should, but, in spite of professional instincts and training, resented it, and incontinently commended all ailments to the devil.

At home he found none of the family in evidence except Miss Vandan. The doctor had been called off, as usual, and Mrs. Tazewell and her daughters were busy with domestic concerns. His fellow-guest was curled up in a huge arm-chair by the library fire, with a novel in her hand and the family cat on her knee. As Guthrie entered she closed the book hurriedly, thereby concealing a bit of a note which had been outspread upon the page. She glanced up at him inquiringly, and, beholding gloom upon his brow, invited him to be seated, rousing herself to coax and tease him into better condition. She more than suspected the cause of his ill humor, and felt sorry for him, considering his case a hard one, and fate most unkind. All of which Guthrie felt in her atmosphere before he had been in her society ten minutes.

When a man is in stress of an emotional sort, and things go at cross-purposes with him, there are nine chances to one that if there be a sympathetic woman about she will be taken into confidence. Guthrie, without any special intention, found himself talking about the old days when he wore a gray uniform, awoke to the sound of reveille, and charged batteries to the music of the rebel yell. Led on by her enthusiasm, his reminiscences grew personal, and he gave her, in outline, one or two spirited adventures. Then, in reply to a question, he told her the story of his capture, while making a reconnaissance, and of what had afterwards befallen him at Glander's Gap.

Miss Vandan was delighted.

"Do you mean to say that you two babes in the woods, who had never laid eyes on each other before, actually caballed to hoodwink a

regiment?" she laughed. "It's altogether the most amazing bit of effrontery, and the funniest. You ought both to have gone to Fort Delaware, and be there now, for your colossal impudence. To think of those deluded veterans giving you bumpers of champagne, and sympathy, and three times three, when you deserved to be blown from the mouth of a cannon! It's delicious!"

Guthrie laughed with her.

"It was a pretty trick," he admitted, complacently, "but its success was entirely due to my confederate. Her acting was perfect: the very cleverest bit of amateur work I ever saw."

Miss Vandan's interest was instantly whetted to an edge, and she became avid for details.

"What was the girl like?" she demanded.

Guthrie, with keen pleasure in the task, described Ruth as he had first seen her. His eyes and voice softened, and his countenance became as an open scroll to his listener. Before he was half through, she interrupted him gayly.

"Ruth Donevan," she affirmed. "My intuition outstrips your speech. From the very beginning I felt that there was romance connected with her, but I never conceived of anything so charming as this. Tell me everything. Did you come back after the war? If not, you deserve to be brayed in a mortar."

"My foolishness might have still clung to me," he objected. "Of course I came back; but I didn't find her: I didn't circle far enough afield."

Then he described his efforts, and the scantiness of his data. "There was only the likeness to Coral Garnet, in a man's hat, to go on," he explained. "And I couldn't patrol the country clapping hats on women's heads promiscuously. It would have been liable to get me into trouble. Her very name was an unknown quantity, and her wherefrom. The whole adventure was so hurried and fantastic that it seemed to make me half-witted."

"And a good thing, too, for the Federal forces," merrily commented his listener. "If half your wits were so efficacious, all of them might have reversed the situation, and changed the current of history. Did you never really identify Miss Donevan until you saw her with her brother's hat on?"

"That was the crystallizing point," Guthrie admitted. "But it was led up to. My mind has been in a ferment ever since I've been here. Old influences and associations have interplayed with new incidents marvellously. Jack's story was familiar to me, and the mother's. Then Miss Donevan herself kept vaguely suggesting some one I had known. It's been fitting in, bit by bit. Jack's hat brought out the likeness to the Confederate scout again, and then, of course, it was all clear."

Miss Vandan nodded enthusiastically. She was enjoying herself immensely, and minded to keep on with it.

"The hat incident was good," she affirmed,—"quite dramatic, and in character with the rest of the performance. Has Miss Donevan recognized you, do you think?"

Guthrie shook his head, and pulled at his beard meditatively.

"Time has gotten in stronger work along my lines," he said. "From a beardless stripling I've become a grizzled and well-nigh middle-aged man. I shouldn't identify my own past and present if I hadn't watched the evolution. She has no means of recognition. There is no associating resemblance about me, and nobody here uses my Christian name, which is the only one she ever heard. Unless the old wonder-witch has kept me in mind, I make no doubt she's forgotten me long ago."

The young lady did not agree with him. She knew very well that women are not prone to forget pretty little adventures of which they themselves are the heroines. She made this plain to him, and then demanded information about the wonder-witch.

"You Southerners have so many signs and wonders that my brain reels under them," she declared. "Rabbits' feet, and cross-marks in the path, and jack-boxes filled with dried snakes, lizards, and bird-feathers, conjure charms and luck signs, and death and disaster portents, make a supernatural medley that Yankee consciousness doesn't readily assimilate. And the queer part is that so many intelligent people among you take the thing seriously and allow for it. What in heaven's name is a wonder-witch? She's a new species to me."

Guthrie laughed amusedly. "The wonder-witch is the ring I gave Miss Donevan," he explained. "We always called it that because of a legend connected with it, and the representation of a necromantic old crone on the signet."

The girl of the period leaned back in her chair and regarded her companion with undisguised admiration.

"You really are the most affording people I ever encountered," she declared, frankly. "You are all survivals. Stick a pin in the other story, to keep the place, and tell me, right here and now, about the wonder-witch."

## XVII.

"Many generations ago," Guthrie began, "an ancestor of mine, a wealthy Magyar from the Carpathians, fell in love with a Romany girl, the grandchild of the queen of a powerful tribe of Tziganies whose head-quarters were in that part of Hungary. Tradition describes the young woman as rarely beautiful, with wonder-bright eyes, and the soft-flowing speech of her people. The Magyar loved well, and the girl met his passion at flood; but the old woman was adverse. There was among the *Romany chals* a suitor whom she favored, and she sought by fair means and foul to bring the match about. Tradition is hazy as to whether the gypsy lover was preferred because of tribal prejudices, or whether there was some special antipathy to my ancestor. Certain it is that the old woman raged, and thwarted the lovers in every way possible. She appears to have been a remarkable creature,—a wise woman, deeply learned in occultism and many sorts of secret knowledge. She was versed in the Black Art, a follower of Simon Magus and a practiser of magic, so that, apart from her tribal



position, she possessed an influence with the Tziganies well-nigh boundless.

"Love, however, has a magic of its own, full of potency and might, so one blessed dark night the gypsy maiden and the Magyar disappeared together.

"Tis said that the witch-mother cursed her descendant, then and there, with a curse unique and terrible, facing to the east, whence comes magic, and spreading her arms abroad, so that the very winds might bear her malediction to its object. And the curse was that because the young wife had forsaken race and kindred for love of the Magyar, her heart should know no other love, either of children, or kindred, or nation, or friends, but under the weight of one dominance should petrify slowly, compressing and hardening like stone.

"Through the old wonder-witch's influence, the curse was passed from tribe to tribe of the Tziganies until it penetrated to the bride's hiding-place and wrought on her imagination to such a degree that she sickened. The Magyar did everything in his power to weaken or remove the impression, even to attempting to assassinate the cause of the trouble, but without avail. The idea of a petrifying heart had taken hold of the girl and was not to be dislodged. So insistent became her dread that, after the birth of her child, a boy with a Romany face and Magyar nature, for whom she cared nothing, the pair returned to Hungary, hoping to propitiate the old wonder-witch and obtain a remission. They had just as well have attempted to remove the Carpathians with a glass lever. The author of their woe rejoiced in her power, and took fresh hold. She wrote out the curse in a scroll, and would study it, placing herself frequently in the young wife's path and pointing downward at it with her finger.

"To make a long story short, an over-excited imagination got in its fell work of superinducing disease, and the gypsy wife presently died for fear of dying. In that day the belief in magic held sway, and credulity and superstition were leash-hounds to be loosed at a necromancer's will. The girl was buried according to Magyar usages, but it is claimed that the *Romany chals*, at the instigation of the old wonder-witch, spirited away her body, and that its ultimate resting-place was known only to the gypsies. Her heart was removed and chemically treated so that petrification really took place.

"Whether or not the old woman finally repented of the indirect murder, and sought to bring good out of evil, tradition does not state; but it appears that on his attaining puberty she presented the dead woman's son (and her own great-grandson) with a curious ring of hand-hammered gold, set with a strange-looking signet, the substance of which no lapidist has ever been able to determine, or could without resolving it to its original elements. The stone is heart-shaped, dull red in hue, and delicately veined with a darker color. It is said to be a bit of the petrified heart. Upon it is engraved a perfect representation of the wonder-witch herself, with her finger on the scroll. The cutting is said by experts to be unusually strong and fine.

"The magic property claimed for this ring is that it insures constancy in women. No woman, accepting it from a man, can falter or

turn from allegiance to him. The ring passes from mother to son, a mode of progress a trifle unusual. It has on it a Romany inscription, a free translation of which is, 'What I love, I desire: what I desire, I grasp: what I grasp, I hold.'

"The Magyar's son, being half Romany, found out all this from his mother's people, and transmitted it. He married a German, and his son an Englishwoman, and so on to the final American mixture. The ring, with its history, was given me by my mother."

"And a very abominable history it is," commented Miss Vandan. "Fancy being betrothed with an obnoxious bit of bewitched flesh instead of a nice, wholesome diamond! It makes one feel crawl and bedevilled only to think of it. And eighteen years ago you foisted this uncanny thing upon poor, unsuspecting Ruth Donevan! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Dr. Guthrie! To trick your own accomplice, after tricking your enemies! It was a most shameless and outrageous performance. Suppose you'd gotten yourself killed, and that dear woman had been compelled to go through life spell-bound to eternal fidelity to a ghost! What sort of *dénouement* would that have been?"

Guthrie parried her attack gayly, declaring that to the ghost such a result would have been eminently satisfactory. He even audaciously maintained that, if the wonder-witch had in truth guarded the position for him, she was an ancestress worthy of honor, as well as the ablest strategist of her cycle. Whereupon Miss Vandan entered the counter-declaration that Guthrie himself would be treasure-trove to the heredity people, as demonstrating in his own person how such traits as malevolence and disregard will persist through unnumbered generations.

They talked a great deal of nonsense, those two, and with it all Guthrie's spirits improved to the point of considering his case rather hopeful, and of feeling that, somehow, his hold upon Ruth was renewed.

As for Miss Vandan, her brain actually teemed with plans and suggestions. For the first time in her career she was visibly enfolded with an atmosphere of uncalculating romance. Her soul joyed within her, and every fibre of her being was set on the evolution of a suitable *dénouement*. For the next day or so she and Guthrie were inseparable, and that their communion was satisfactory was evidenced by the beatitude of their countenances.

When Hugh Donevan reappeared, the young lady promptly took him into confidence, a proceeding to which Guthrie might have objected had he not caught a glimpse of the arcana of another situation.

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### XVIII.

Virtue has need to be its own reward, for in the reaction after a hard duty has been performed, if it were not for the approving conscience, one would have nothing. Even then the conscience must approve lustily in order to hold misery at bay and make duty appear worth the doing. From her point of view, going away had seemed to Ruth the best possible course, and she had braced up her nerves, held

down her heart, and taken it gallantly. During the ride up to the gap, the exercise, change, and her brother's society had made it relatively easy to hold thought quiescent. Nor had the next day been bad, for her kinswoman was delighted to see her, and eager in the interchange of inquiries and accounts of local happenings. Hugh's return home made a break also, for directions had to be given and messages sent to the servants.

It was on the third day that the reaction set in heavily. Miss Randolph awoke with a blinding sick-headache, for which the only remedy was absolute quiet in a darkened room. She was an intelligent woman and a good *raconteur*, with a fine store of observation and experience to draw on, and the gift of illustrative and sympathetic expression. The house seemed strangely silent without her, and Ruth wandered about, cut adrift from her own usual occupations, and with no others to take their place. This was misery's chance, and it straightway availed itself, pouncing down like a vampire and driving its beak into her heart with intent to suck thence the life-blood of courage and hope. Ruth had a very bad time of it, made worse by the strength and soundness of her own nature. Her code was so simple and yet so uncompromising: to love grandly, to trust generously, and to follow the dictates of conscience without shirking or subterfuge,—that was all of it.

Enough, too, to give body and substance to suffering as well as to joy. Wearily and insistently she went over it all, love playing the gamut from exaltation, through wonder and pain, to renunciation, lingering miserably over the minor chords until life seemed a dirge and strained heartstrings the fit instrument whereon to play it. And that the pain was all needless did not make it one bit less hard to endure. To her it was real and tangible, and the thought that it might be unnecessary never entered her mind.

In the afternoon the innate gallantry of her nature reasserted itself, imposing a necessity for action. The atmosphere of the silent house seemed to smother her, and she ordered her horse. She must get out into the open and exercise and weary her body, so that brain and heart might find relief in physical needs.

An unacknowledged sentiment had caused Ruth always to use gray cloth for her habits, but she had yielded to conventionality in the matter of head-gear. On this trip, however, she had worn Jack's slouch hat, partly from unexplained impulse, and partly from deliberate effort at renewal of old association. For the latter reason entirely, she rode a descendant of Lapwing and wore the wonder-witch's ring. On the way to the gap she had kept the talk on war topics, encouraged Hugh to reminiscence, and even drawn from the closet of memory and dusted her own wild escapade. The past, in very truth, was hers, and in it, to her knowledge, was no other woman.

So now, in her ride of unrest, she instinctively turned her horse in the direction of the old frame house which had witnessed the climax of her adventure. It was situated several miles from Miss Randolph's, and during Ruth's former visits had always been occupied, so that, although she had passed it occasionally during the eighteen years, and

was somewhat familiar with its exterior, she had never crossed the threshold since that old time of Federal occupation. The situation was isolated, and after the death, many years previous, of the owner, and the dispersion of his heirs, it had been impossible to get suitable tenants for the old house, and it had gradually graded down, falling into worse and worse hands with each renewal of occupants. At the time of Ruth's last visit, three years before, it had been in possession of a lawless family of mountaineers, named Wakefield, a morose, evil lot, more than suspected of illicit practices. During this occupancy the house degenerated from mere unthrift and dilapidation into the unmistakable aspect of disrepute which a house can acquire when kept continually in bad company. It was suspected that the cellars were used as a *dépôt* for contraband whiskey, but for a long time the suspicion went unverified. The population thereaway was sparse, and the Wakefields were known to be keenly averse to interference, and, in both sexes, addicted to the swift use of fire-arms, with great certainty of aim.

But when the negroes whispered about, with horrid insistence, a grim legend of a peddler seen to enter the Wakefield door, but not to come out again, the populace decided that the time was ripe for investigation, and, summoning official aid, raided the place. The Wakefields resisted, and there was a battle, in which a man or two were shot. This added to the evil repute of the place, and it needed only a hideous discovery in one of the cellars, and an incontinent lynching in the back-yard, to give it a character which would condemn it to isolation from human occupation forever. The agent no longer took the trouble even to fasten up doors and windows. He knew that in the bucolic imagination, both white and colored, the place would speedily become a choice rendezvous for evil spirits and "haunts," and the particular stamping-ground of the devil.

As Ruth turned from a side-gate into the public road, she noticed a boy nephew of her relative's, who lived with her, in a far field, talking to a man on horseback. She cantered on briskly, not wishing to be belated. A mile or so on she turned into a cross-road which debouched through a pine forest and was apparently but little used. The afternoon was sombre, with a dull November sky and intermittent sunshine. The chill of the air was untouched, and the earth held the frost of the previous night, so that, except where fallen pine-needles deadened all sound, it rang hard as iron under the horse's hoofs. On either hand the pines, *aræostyled* and massive, uplifted columns of bronze, with solemn cathedral effects, enhanced by the interlacing of dark branches above into impost and arch, rib and groin. Through the foliated intricacies of this mighty roof the light sifted dimly down to the shadowless carpet of brown pine-needles. Ruth rode slowly, impressed with the silence and grandeur of the place and invigorated by the aromatic incense which she drew into her lungs.

A short distance farther the woods opened into cleared fields, enclosed by dilapidated fences, and abandoned to the encroachment of broomsedge and scrub. The road, much washed and gullied, led circuitously to the old frame house in the distance, so Ruth left it and cut

across through the fields. The house stood bare and forlorn among its denuded trees, the very epitome and centre of an encompassing desolation.

Ruth shuddered as she looked at it, mildewed over with decay, its sashless windows goggling into space like eyeless sockets, its smokeless chimneys eloquent of cold hearthstones below. She did not wonder that the place was avoided by all, and was half sorry she had come to it herself. She wrenched her mind away from the wonder which of the trees had been used as a gibbet, and resolutely recalled the old time, striving to fill the silence and desolation with the movements of men and the glow of camp-fires. The yard enclosure was gone, but a broken gate-post stuck up in front, like a last tooth in the jaw of old age. Ruth dismounted and fastened her horse to it. The pathway to the house was distinct still and well beaten, but the porch itself was unsound, and sagged mournfully away from the building. Ruth crossed it dubiously and laid her hand on the door. As she did so her horse whinnied sharply, and she glanced back at him, startled. There was nothing in sight: so, concluding that the beast was simply protesting against being left, she pushed open the door and entered. The room to the right of the hall was the one in which the jovial general and his staff had toasted her on that far-away morning. She glanced in at it curiously, noting its utter desolation and the dirt and dilapidation which spoke of its hideous after-days. She proceeded up the stairway, trying to revivify old associations and emotions, and failing signally. The *now* was omnipresent, and for the *then* there could be only the unsubstantiality of a ghostly return.

It was of Guthrie, not of the gay young Confederate, that Ruth thought as she crossed the upper hall and entered the small room in which their interview had taken place. Here it was better: the room was moderately clean, and the window, while denuded of a pane or two of glass, retained its sashes. The gloom without had lifted a little, and what scant sunshine there was entered and lay in a segmented square on the floor. A shabby old table, too forlorn to tempt theft, stood in the centre of the room, and beside it a broken-backed chair, which seemed somehow to turn the edge of the general desolation. Ruth seated herself and strove loyally to bring back the past, even removing her gloves so that she might derive inspiration from the wonder-witch's ring.

So intent was she that she did not notice the noiseless opening of an inner door, or the equally noiseless advance of a man in gray uniform. It was only when a quiet voice said, "It's pretty hard work conjuring it all back, isn't it?" that she looked up in terror, with her heart in her throat, to behold—the Confederate!

For a delirious instant it seemed to her that she must be trysting with a ghost, and then Guthrie's voice, entreating forgiveness for a stupid trick, was in her ears, and Guthrie's strong hands held hers in their clasp. Then, in a moment, their eyes had spoken, and a great light broke over her, and she was gathered close in his arms, clinging to his breast, with his lips seeking hers, and her heart all a-tremble with relief and love and comprehension.

## XIX.

In the first flush of recognition, the linking together of her present and past, the realization that this new love of hers was but a delayed growth and blossoming from the old root, Ruth yielded herself gladly and let love have its way. But after a little her omnipresent honesty reasserted itself. She pushed Guthrie from her with the quick exclamation that she had no right,—that he was the property of another. Guthrie, thanks to a hint from Miss Vandan, not utterly at sea, quietly drew her close again, holding her face against his breast and explaining that she herself, and no other woman, had held the first place in his heart since that far-away morning when he had bidden her farewell in the room down below and left with her his pledge. The neighborhood had made a most natural blunder, he affirmed, but one exceedingly annoying to all parties. Then he laughed gayly and bade Ruth look to her own flesh and name for Miss Vandan's lover. Fate had given Hugh a chance at retaliation for old scores by a bit of Northern conquest, and, if signs went for anything, he had embraced his opportunity.

Ruth professed herself satisfied, and, hand in hand, they proceeded down-stairs, reviving the past more successfully in company. On their way out, they visited the lower room, which by some singular optical delusion appeared to emerge from the hideousness of its later happenings and even to take on a bit of reflex cheerfulness.

Guthrie produced the roan filly from an out-house, where she had been stabled (a fact already commented on by the descendant of Lapwing), and the pair rode away together. During the ride Guthrie explained sundry other matters. At Miss Vandan's instigation he had shaved off his beard, and borrowed Hugh's old uniform, which fortunately fitted him fairly well. He had made an extra early start and come up to the gap that day, halting for a mid-day rest at a house in the notch. His intention had been to go straight to Miss Randolph's, but he had missed his way a little, and finally turned aside into a field to interview a boy about it. While talking he had caught a glimpse of her, on horseback, in the road, and like an inspiration it had come over him where she was going. Previous knowledge of the country, and a few hurried directions from the boy, enabled him to utilize a short cut, and, by hard riding, to get to the goal ahead of her. Hugh had told him that the house was unoccupied. The roan filly had proved her mettle and been safely hidden in the out-house full three minutes before Ruth had emerged from the pine forest. From an upper window he had watched her approach, assured of the hold which the old time must have on her by her coming, and also by her wearing the hat with the crossed bayonets.

Then he put out his hand and took hers and drew the glove from it that he might lay his lips to her fingers as he had done long ago. He drew off the ring, and then replaced it with, as he said, a deeper significance. And while the horses moved slowly, side by side, he gave her a brief *résumé* of its history.

After that the talk drifted to personal matters, and Guthrie gave a



succinct account of himself since their parting, dwelling largely upon how the thought of her had comforted him in prison. He also brought forward, with emphasis, the fact that he had really been mindful of his promise to return and had sought for her.

"It was inconsequently and inadequately," he admitted, "but still I did make an effort. I'd be ashamed to face you if I hadn't, far less to accept the rich guerdon of your love. What held you faithful, my dearest? You couldn't know of my abortive attempt. That you should have held to me all these years seems little short of a miracle. I can hardly believe it."

Ruth joyously smiled at him with her eyes, and uplifted her hand upon which his ring shone.

"Your ancestress did it," she mocked. "I was spell-bound to constancy by the old wonder-witch."

But in their hearts they both knew that Love himself had been the magician.

When an official report of the engagement was made, Dr. Tazewell laughed mightily, smiting his thigh as one who sees his enemy fallen.

"The squirt-gun's a failure," he crowed to his wife. "The only disease he could catch from Ruth he's taken in its most virulent form, and that, too, after all possible antiseptic precautions."

Miss Vandan laughed likewise, gleefully confiding to Hugh that she had applied to head-quarters for all possible information respecting a certain befooled and put-upon regiment.

"In the kindness of hoaxed but sympathetic hearts," she declared, "they toasted this nefarious couple. And now that the wedding is actually to take place, every man alive of them shall have an invitation, and a chance at return champagne from the arch-conspirator."

THE END.

*SEA-ISLAND COTTON RESPUN.*

**T**HE flooding of the sea-islands last summer left thirty thousand persons homeless, naked, and famishing, but for the wide sympathy and generous aid which reached them, with no little difficulty, through Clara Barton and the Red Cross Relief Association. While these facts are fresh in the public mind, it may be well to recall some of the events which came to pass on these sea-islands during the eventful years of 1861-62.

South Carolina had struck the first blow in the bombardment of Fort Sumter, and from that day, April 12, 1861, both North and South eagerly watched events in the Old South State. When in October of the same year the great naval and military expedition sailed from Hampton Roads and was victorious in the battle off Hilton Head, a shudder went through the South and a thrill of joy through the North.

Hilton Head Island is washed on its eastern shore by the waves of the Atlantic Ocean, which, after breaking their force upon this and other outermost islands, have power enough remaining to force their salt waters, twice in twenty-four hours, through the creeks, inlets, and bays that like a net-work divide the land along the coast of South Carolina into sea-islands. Upon these islands grows the finest cotton in the world. So long and so fine is the fibre of the real sea-island cotton that for years the crafty French weavers have mixed it with silk, and the rest of the world fancy that the silk-worm was the original spinner of every thread in the rich fabric.

When the Union troops, rejoicing in their victory, first set their feet on Hilton Head, there were millions of dollars' worth of unpicked and unginned cotton which became the property of the Union government. The officers did not realize all this at that first hour, but the flames of the burning gin-houses, that were filled with raw cotton and were ignited as the owners fled, threw new light on the subject. That which the owners deemed too valuable to fall into the hands of their enemy must surely be worth something to the victors.

Hilton Head and St. Philip's were the first of the sea-islands that came into the possession of the Union. On these were situated Fort Walker and Fort Beauregard, the two Confederate strongholds on either side the Broad River. This was an important inlet, because it was the only safe entrance for ships into Port Royal harbor. When these were captured by the Union troops, a sudden panic seized the owners of slaves and plantations on the sea-islands. Men, women, and children of the slave-holders' families gathered up their portable treasures and fled to the mainland, or, rowing along the salt creeks and inlets that wind around the many islands, hurried toward Savannah. Here the panic was so general that extra trains were advertised to leave the city to convey the inhabitants to places of safety. Among the hundreds of slaves living on these islands, only now and then a coachman or a body-servant accompanied his master in his stamped

for shelter from the Union guns. The slaves felt sure that deliverance was coming, while their masters wished to be delivered from the coming deliverance. Whether the slaves first expressed the thought in song or caught the words from some one else, "Kingdom Coming" exactly pictured the situation :

Say, darkies, hab yo' seen ole Maussa,  
Wid a mufftash on his face,  
Go 'long de road dis berry mornin',  
Like he gwine ter leab de place?  
He seen a smoke 'way up de ribber,  
Whar de Linkum gun-boats lay;  
He took his hat an' lef' berry sudden,  
An' I spec' he's run away.

*Chorus :*

De Maussa run—ha, ha !  
De Darky stay—ho, ho !  
It must be dat de kingdom comin',  
In de year of Jubilo !

Not only the slaves upon the sea-islands rejoiced in the thought that they were under the protection of Maussa Linkum, but fugitives from the mainland escaped from their masters and sought to pass into the Union lines. At this some of the Northern papers expressed alarm. "We will find ourselves with an elephant on our hands," one cried. "The North will soon be overrun with blacks," another exclaimed. "The Union will have to support them, for the ignorant and indolent creatures are not able to take care of themselves," said a third. On the other hand, the anti-slavery papers eagerly urged the government to make use of these freedmen by hiring them to pick the cotton and rice that were wasting in the fields, or to give them employment upon the earthworks being erected for the strengthening of the positions held by the Union troops. A correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, writing from Port Royal, said, "There is no wish on the part of the negroes to go North. They dread the cold; dislike to leave their homes, and look intelligently forward to emancipation on the soil." A correspondent of the *Times* also wrote from Port Royal as follows: "There was a jubilee last night in the negro quarters at Seabrook, dancing and singing around fires that they built, and inside of the captured Fort Walker a religious meeting was held and thanks offered to God for their deliverance. There can be no doubt that the negro question is destined immediately to assume in this quarter proportions and aspects utterly unlike any that have been presented elsewhere. . . . No shadow of inducement has thus far been held out to the slaves by the national forces. They come to us without any invitation; they express a willingness to work; they have already given valuable information, acted as guides, and in the labors to which they are put they will prove of prodigious assistance."

About this time Mr. Edward L. Pierce, of Boston, visited the sea-islands for the purpose of ascertaining the condition and needs of the people so recently freed from slavery. He wrote to the *Boston Advertiser* of February 24, "An impression prevails that the negroes have

been less cared for [on these islands] than in most rebel districts. If this be so, and a beneficent reform shall be achieved here, the experiment may anywhere else be hopefully attempted." Almost immediately the Freedmen's Relief Association and the Education Commission began considering how best to help on this work. Soon afterwards another Boston daily published an editorial from which the following paragraph is taken: "The thirteen thousand persons released from bondage by our arms are more anxious to learn to read than they are to be freed. This inestimable boon, which has hitherto been denied them, they hunger and thirst for indeed. They are glad and proud to learn that Maussa Lincoln is thinking of them, and pledge themselves to merit his approval. Mr. Pierce will return immediately with three teachers selected already, Messrs. Zachos, Hooper, and Gannett, and next week the government will probably charter a vessel to carry as many others as may be ready, with a full supply of school-books, clothing, etc. The Commission will hold frequent meetings. Every moment is precious. Twenty-five or thirty teachers, men and women, ought to be forwarded by the earliest transport."

On the first Sunday in March, 1862, thirty-one men and women from Boston, twenty-eight from New York, and three from Philadelphia and Washington, came on board the steamship *Atlantic*, which lay at anchor in New York Bay. Sixty-two in all took the oath of allegiance that day, and had their names enrolled as workers for the freedmen. Some were to act in the capacity of superintendents of the abandoned estates, and were to direct the labors of the negroes, but more were to act as teachers of whatever needed to be taught. In fact, the industrial teaching and learning to read were to go hand in hand.

Early Sunday morning, March 9, the *Atlantic* sailed up the river Broad and anchored in the spacious harbor of Port Royal. On the right bank, which at that point makes an extensive sweep, giving the harbor the appearance of a broad lake, the beautiful town of Beaufort is situated. The scene was one of peculiar interest for those earnest men and women who had come to do what they could to help solve the "race problem," which even then was a most important question. From the deck of the *Atlantic* they could see the deserted homes of the wealthiest families in that region. These homes of comfort and elegance, surrounded by beautiful lawns and gardens, stood on the landward side of the finest avenue in Beaufort. For nearly a mile this street, shaded by spreading trees and cooled by every breath from the sea, followed the winding shore. Here had dwelt the owners of many of the plantations and of hundreds of the slaves on the neighboring islands.

The island on which Beaufort is situated is one of the largest of the group. The commanding officers of the Union troops had followed the example of the former rulers of these islands, inasmuch as they had made Beaufort the commercial centre as well as military headquarters for the islands under their protection. Many of the deserted mansions were occupied by Union officers. Others, still unoccupied, were placed at the disposal of Mr. Pierce, who arranged that teachers

and superintendents under his command should occupy them until he could plan the work for other islands.

The Rev. Solomon Peck, D.D., of Roxbury, Massachusetts, had already opened a school for the colored people of Beaufort. Here many of the waiting teachers were employed temporarily, and many were the helpful lessons which they received from the good doctor. In him the negroes trustingly confided, and his assistant teachers soon learned the secret of this confidence. It was love for the people and the work he had begun. Mr. Pierce refers to him in his report to the Secretary of the Treasury. The following is the last sentence of his glowing tribute: "To him belongs, and ever will belong, the distinguished honor of being the first minister of Christ to enter the field which our arms had opened."

Mr. Pierce, after reviewing the territory over which his care extended, decided to make his head-quarters at the Pope plantation on St. Helena Island. Accordingly, he and Mr. Hooper, with four of the Northern ladies, moved into the old Pope mansion. To reach this place from Beaufort they sailed three miles across the bay to Ladies' Island. There they took a carriage and drove to a bridge which connects Ladies' and St. Helena Islands. After leaving the main road they drove for nearly a mile through the Pope plantation before they were able to catch a glimpse of the large two-story white mansion, with verandas on both floors.

Just in front of the tall pine-trees which stood about the house was a lawn, where the negroes were gathered to welcome them. Such a nondescript group as those hundred and fifty persons made! Most of the men were dressed in rudely-made suits of carpeting. The bare floors all through the house showed where the carpet had come from. Some of the housemaids were gay in "de missus'" ball-dresses, while other women, who had to take what they could get, were arrayed in portions of her wardrobe that were never intended for outer garments.

"Howdy," said a tall straight black man who was crowned with a very high hat. "We hope dat yo'll mek dese niggers stan' round. I's Marcus, de praise-leader o' dis plantation, an' dis yeah 'oman's my wife, Susannah." The praise-leaders were very important characters on the plantations in those days, and on all the different islands the superintendents and teachers tried to win their confidence, for they needed their influence in getting the people to go to work in the cotton-fields.

Whenever the word cotton was uttered the negroes thought of the pain and sorrow they had endured in the fields. It was a problem, therefore, with the superintendents, how best to overcome this natural prejudice, for no work could be accomplished until this was done. The children were gathered into schools and taught to read; women in the negro-yard (never called quarters there) were taught to make their homes more home-like; and gradually, by gentleness and tact, confidence was won, and the praise-leaders advised the people to do as Maussa Linkum wished and go to work planting cotton. They received pledges that there should be no whipping, and that each one should receive his pay for his work in honest money; in short, that they would be treated like men and women. The negroes on each plantation

were allowed to choose their foreman, and in many cases they chose the man who had been their old "obeshay" or driver. "'Case," said one, in explanation, "I reckon old John nebber gib no whippin' if 'twa'n't fo' ole Maussa."

Soon all the teachers and superintendents were as busy as bees. Besides morning schools for the children, many of the teachers opened afternoon classes for the field-hands. Meantime, while the quiet work was going on, there were wars and rumors of wars which agitated the divided nation. The Confederates did not yield all rights to the sea-islands without a struggle, and raids were by no means rare. On April 17 there was a lively skirmish between Union and Confederate troops on Edisto Island. On April 29 the Union forces captured a Confederate battery near Port Royal, and two days later they took one at White Point, North Edisto Island.

On May 12 President Lincoln issued a proclamation declaring that the blockade should be opened on and after June 1. When the teachers realized that this meant that the gun-boats were to be removed from Hilton Head, leaving the islands unprotected, a number of them decided that they could not remain in constant fear lest the former owners should return and demand their slaves and plantations at the cannon's mouth. No one could blame those who left, for the danger was real, but those who decided to stay and work on deserve our admiration. Enough remained, so that the work was not materially crippled.

Another real danger constantly threatened,—the loathsome contagion, small-pox. The former slaves were superstitious fatalists and helped to spread any disease by acting upon the sentiment which one expressed thus: "Oh, it's de Lawd's sickness. If I am t'hab it I hab it. Dar's no gittin' 'way from de Lawd's sickness." Then yellow fever broke out, and some valuable lives were sacrificed. At Beaufort General O. M. Mitchell, the well-known astronomer, then in command of the Department of the South, was one of the first who fell a victim of this plague. He died on October 30, 1862, one of the most learned and noble men who ever set foot on the sea-islands.

During the month of August of this year, Brigadier-General Saxton issued an order from his head-quarters at Beaufort referring to the marriage customs of the colored people under his authority. This order provided that each freedman must confine himself to the one wife to whom he had been lawfully married. If he had never been so married, he should choose the woman who was mother of most of his children, and be married to her as soon as possible.

When this order was read by the superintendents it created a great stir among the negroes. Many of them rejoiced and considered it a final proof that they were free "jus' like buckrah man." In more than one of the churches the Sunday morning services closed with a big wedding. The old gray-haired brides and grooms, many of whom had been true to each other through all the terrible days of slavery, stood two by two down the length of the middle aisle. Many of them did not know their right hand from their left, so they faced each other and clasped both hands while they listened to the Bible law of marriage. Then the minister asked the solemn question, "Do you take this woman



whose hands you hold to be your lawfully wedded wife? Do you promise to love, honor, and protect her as long as you both do live?" A deep, strong answer arose from the lips of more than fifty men, "I do."

Then the same question was answered by as many dusky brides, and after an earnest prayer the officiating clergyman pronounced them husband and wife.

"I's a Missus now same's de qual'ty," said Susannah, with a toss of her head, as she met Lydia, one of the young women, who expected to be married the following Sunday.

"You's Missus what?" replied Lydia, half sarcastically. "'Pears to me dat yo's not'in' but jus' Susannah, after all dat fuss."

"Dat's a fac'!" cried the old praise-leader of the Pope plantation. "We is not'in' but Susannah an' Marcus, after all. We jus' got to hab some odder name, like de buckrah hab."

This important matter was talked over for several weeks, during which many others were united in marriage. At last a meeting was announced calling the men to decide upon some uniform method of choosing surnames. When they came together there were many men of many minds. One old patriarch called "Uncle Demus" thought that they had no more use for last names than "de 'postles an' de prophets." But the younger men did not agree with him, and one of them cried, "Dem Bible folks hadn't come to freedom days, an' we has."

It was evidently the sense of the meeting that surnames were necessary, but the problem was how to choose them. One suggested that some of the colored people in Beaufort had taken the names of their old masters.

"Dat might do in Bufort," said Marcus, rising slowly to his full height. He had been thinking very carefully upon this subject since his wedding day, and he gave the results of his cogitations. "Yes, dat might do in Bufort, where no maussa hab ober ten or sebenteen slabs. Dat wouldn't be such a big fambly by de same name. But s'pose we do it here, dar would be mor'n one hundred an' fifty Popes, 'bout de same number of Eustises, an' 'most three hundred Coffins from de ole Coffin Point plantation. Now, I motion dat ebery one take de name he likes de bes'. I's gwine ter be Marcus Washington, an' my ole 'oman she'll be Susannah Washington. Bredren, I done said my say."

Uncle Marcus's motion was unanimously adopted, although very few were prepared to announce the name of their choice. Many laughable incidents occurred before all were supplied with names. In some cases husband and wife could not agree upon the same name, and would appeal to the teachers, who gave them names from Yankee-land. Thus it happened that on the same street Washingtons and Jeffersons lived next door to Adamases and Bradfords.

These two years were times of experiments,—times of beginnings, of events leading these people into a new life. With the year 1863 came real political freedom; and how the colored people living on the sea-islands celebrated that Freedom Day Jubilee, January 1! During

that first month of manhood some of the freedmen began to realize that they too might fight for their homes and their families, and the first regiment of Union colored soldiers ever organized was enrolled at Port Royal, South Carolina.

*Dora E. W. Spratt.*

### THE PASSING OF THE ESSAY.

IT is the curious custom of modern men of letters to talk to the world a great deal about their work ; to explain its conditions, to uphold its value, to protest against adverse criticism, and to interpret the needs and aspirations of mankind through the narrow medium of their own resources. A good many years have passed since Mr. Arnold noticed the growing tendency to express the very ordinary desires of very ordinary people by such imposing phrases as "laws of human progress" and "edicts of the national mind." To-day, if a new story or a new play meets with unusual approbation, it is at once attributed to some sudden mental development of society, to some distinct change in our methods of regarding existence. We are assured without hesitation that all stories and all plays in the near future will be built up upon these favored models.

To a few of us, perhaps, such prophetic voices have but a dismal ring. We listen to their repeated cry, "The old order passeth away," and we are sorry in our hearts, having loved it well for years, and feeling no absolute confidence in its successor. Then some fine afternoon we look abroad, and are amazed to see so much of the old order still remaining, and apparently disinclined to pass away, even when it is told plainly to go. How many times have we been warned that poetry is shaking off its shackles, and that rhyme and rhythm have had their little day? Yet now, as in the past, poets are dancing cheerfully in fetters, with a harmonious sound which is most agreeable to our ears. How many times have we been told that Sir Walter Scott's novels are dead, stone dead ; that their grave has been dug, and their epitaph written? Yet new and beautiful editions are following each other so rapidly from the press, that the most ardent enthusiast wonders wistfully who are the happy men with money enough to buy them. How many times have we been assured that realistic and psychological fiction has supplanted its gay brother of romance? Yet never was there a day when writers of romantic stories sprang so rapidly and so easily into fame. Stevenson leads the line, but Conan Doyle and Stanley Weyman follow close behind ; while as for Mr. Rider Haggard, he is a problem which defies any reasonable solution. The fabulous prices paid by syndicates for his tales, the thousands of readers who wait breathlessly from week to week for the carefully doled-out chapters, the humiliating fact that "She" is as well known throughout two continents as "Robert Elsmere,"—these uncontrovertible witnesses of success would seem to indicate that what people really hunger for is not realism, nor sober truthfulness, but the maddest and wildest impossibilities which the human brain is capable of conceiving.

And so when I am told, among other prophetic items, that the "light essay" is passing rapidly away, and that, in view of its approaching death-bed, it cannot be safely recommended as "a good opening for enterprise," I am fain, before acquiescing gloomily in such a decree, to take heart of grace, and look a little around me. It is discouraging, doubtless, for the essayist to be suddenly informed that his work is *in articulo mortis*. He feels as a carpenter might feel were he told that chairs and doors and tables are going out of fashion, and that he had better turn his attention to mining engineering, or a new food for infants. Perhaps he endeavors to explain that a great many chairs were sold in the past week, that they are not without utility, and that they seem to him as much in favor as ever. Such feeble arguments meet with no response. Furniture, he is assured,—on the authority of the speaker,—is distinctly out of date. The spirit of the time calls for something different, and the "best business talent"—delightful phrase, and equally applicable to a window-frame or an epic—is moving in another direction. This is what Mr. Lowell used to call the conclusive style of judgment, "which consists simply in belonging to the other parish;" but parish boundaries are the same convincing things now that they were forty years ago.

Is the essay then in such immediate and distressing danger? Is it unwritten, unpublished, or unread? Just ten years have passed since a well-printed little book was offered carelessly to the great English public. It was anonymous. It was hampered by a Latin title which attracted the few and repelled the many. It contained seven of the very lightest essays that ever glided into print. It grappled with no problems, social or spiritual; it touched but one of the vital issues of the day. It was not serious, and it was not written with any very definite view, save to give entertainment and pleasure to its readers. By all the laws of modern mentors, it should have been consigned to speedy and merited oblivion. Yet what happened? I chanced to see that book within a few months of its publication, and sent at once to London for a copy, thinking to easily secure a first edition. I received a fourth, and, with it, the comforting assurance that the first was already commanding a heavy premium. In another week the American reprints of "Obiter Dicta" lay on all the book counters of our land. The author's name was given to the world. A second volume of essays followed the first; a third, the second; a fourth, the third. The last are so exceedingly light as to be little more than brief notices and reviews. All have sold well, and Mr. Birrell has established—surely with no great effort—his reputation as a man of letters. Editors of magazines are glad to print his work; readers of magazines are glad to see it; newspapers are delighted when they have any personal gossip about the author to tell a curious world. This is what "the best business talent" must call success, for these are the tests by which it is accustomed to judge. The light essay has a great deal of hardihood to flaunt and flourish in this shameless manner, when it has been severely warned that it is not in accord with the spirit of the age, and that its day is on the wane.

It is curious, too, to see how new and charming editions of "Vir-

ginibus Puerisque" meet with a ready sale. Mr. Stevenson has done better work than in this volume of scattered papers, which are more suggestive than satisfactory; yet there are always readers ready to exult over the valorous "Admirals," or dream away a glad half-hour to the seductive music of "Pan's Pipes." Mr. Lang's "Essays in Little" and "Letters to Dead Authors" have reached thousands of people who have never read his admirable translations from the Greek. Mr. Pater's essays—which, however, are not light—are far better known than his beautiful "Marius the Epicurean." Lamb's "Elia" is more widely read than are his letters, though it would seem a heart-breaking matter to choose between them. Hazlitt's essays are still rich mines of pleasure, as well as fine correctives for much modern nonsense. The first series of Mr. Arnold's "Essays in Criticism" remains his most popular book, and the one which has done more than all the rest to show the great half-educated public what is meant by distinction of mind. Indeed, there never was a day when by-roads to culture were more diligently sought for than now by people disinclined for long travel or much toil, and the essay is the smoothest little path which runs in that direction. It offers no instruction, save through the medium of enjoyment, and one saunters lazily along with a charming unconsciousness of effort. Great results are not to be gained in this fashion, but it should sometimes be play-hour for us all. Moreover, there are still readers keenly alive to the pleasure which literary art can give; and the essayists, from Addison down to Mr. Arnold and Mr. Pater, have recognized the value of form, the powerful and persuasive eloquence of style. Consequently, an appreciation of the essay is the natural result of reading it. Like virtue, it is its own reward. "Culture," says Mr. Addington Symonds, "makes a man to be something. It does not teach him to create anything." Most of us in this busy world are far more interested in what we can learn to do than in what we can hope to become; but it may be that those who content themselves with strengthening their own faculties, and broadening their own sympathies for all that is finest and best, are of greater service to their tired and downcast neighbors than are the unwearied toilers who urge us so relentlessly to the field.

A few critics of an especially judicial turn are wont to assure us now and then that the essay ended with Emerson, or with Sainte-Beuve, or with Addison, or with Montaigne,—a more remote date than this being inaccessible, unless, like Eve in the old riddle, it died before it was born. Montaigne is commonly selected as the idol of this exclusive worship. "I don't care for any essayist later than Montaigne." It has a classic sound, and the same air of intellectual discrimination as another very popular remark: "I don't read any modern novelist, except George Meredith." Hearing these verdicts, one is tempted to say, with Marianne Dashwood, "This is admiration of a very particular kind." To minds of a more commonplace order, it would seem that a love for Montaigne should lead insensibly to an appreciation of Sainte-Beuve; that an appreciation of Sainte-Beuve awakens in turn a sympathy for Mr. Matthew Arnold; that a sympathy for Mr. Arnold paves the way to a keen enjoyment of Mr. Emerson or Mr. Pater. It

is a linked chain, and, though all parts are not of equal strength and beauty, all are of service to the whole. "Let neither the peculiar quality of anything nor its value escape thee," counsels Marcus Aurelius; and if we seek our profit wherever it may be found, we insensibly acquire that which is needful for our growth. Under any circumstances, it is seldom wise to confuse the preferences or prejudices of a portion of mankind with the irresistible progress of the ages. Rhymes may go, but they are with us still. Romantic fiction may be submerged, but at present it is well above water. The essay may die, but just now it possesses a lively and encouraging vitality. Whether we regard it as a means of culture or as a field for the "best business talent," we are fain to remark, in the words of Sancho Panza, "This youth, considering his weak state, hath left in him an amazing power of speech."

*Agnes Repplier.*

### THE BLUEBIRD'S SONG.

IF the swaying mountain harebell  
Had its choice,  
And could shatter the sweet silence  
With a voice;

If a violet bud its fragrant  
Soul had found,  
And would breathe the lovely secret  
Forth in sound;

If the summer sky the meaning  
Of a rune  
Would unfold in one enchanting  
Bit of tune;

If a poet his fleet fancies,  
Sought in vain,  
Would o'ertake in one compelling  
Perfect strain;

If a lover his first ardor,  
Hidden long,  
Would express in one revealing  
Tender song;

Flower and poet, sky and lover,  
Well might capture  
From a bluebird's throat the melting  
Tones of rapture.

*Ella Gilbert Ives.*

## THE RUMPETY CASE.

*By the Author of "Pratt Portraits," "A Literary Courtship," etc.*

WHEN Sandoria is snowbound it is not so very much quieter, even in its outer aspect, than at any other time; for the monotony of snow is no more complete than the monotony of yellow-gray prairie. Even when, at rare intervals, the snow covers the fences, it is no characteristic landmark which is thus obliterated; no picturesque rustic bars are thus lost to the landscape, no irregular and venerable stone walls. At the best a prairie fence offers nothing more distinctive to the view than a succession of scrawny upright stakes connected by wires invisible at a few rods' distance.

One feature Sandoria boasts, to be sure, which lends a certain distinction to the landscape at every season: namely, a long line of cottonwood-trees following the course of a half-hearted stream known as "the creek." The water-supply is but a grudging one, yet it has proved sufficient not only to induce the growth of cottonwoods, but to raise the tiny collection of houses known as Sandoria to the rank and dignity of a county-seat. For who could doubt the future growth and prosperity of a prairie town rejoicing in the unique advantage of a watercourse?

There is, however, in the modern scheme of things, one agent more potent than running water, and that is the arbitrary, omnipotent, indispensable railroad; and the railroad in its erratic course saw fit to give the cold shoulder to the ambitious little county-seat, left it ten miles to the eastward, and then went zigzagging up to Denver with a conscience as dead as that of the corporation whose creature it was.

Sandoria, unable to retaliate, took its reverses philosophically, and straightway fell into a profound slumber, from which it is thoroughly roused but once a year. Once a year, in the depth of winter, the much-injured county-seat asserts its rightful dignity; for once a year the court convenes within its borders, and then the whole county becomes a meek tributary to its proper head. With indisputable authority the citizens of the two upstart railroad towns are summoned as jurors; ranchman and cowboy from all the countryside make daily trips in the service of the law to the neglected little county-seat, leaving, as is but just, many a ponderous silver dollar in "sample-room" or "store." At such times the visitors admit that Sandoria is a snug little place, and the new frame court-house a credit to the county, only why did they build a town where you can't see the mountains? Then the Sandorians reply that from the slight elevation west of the town there is a view of the Peak itself,—neither critic nor apologist taking into consideration how rarely men and women ascend their little hills to contemplate the wider glories of life.

To-day the court was sitting, and the town rejoiced. Every man, woman, and child felt the pleasing exhilaration of knowing that something was going forward. The square two-story false fronts of the



peak-roofed buildings looked with one-eyed approval upon the thronging men and women, horses and dogs, enlivening the single street of the town. A fervent sun shone gratefully upon the loungers in front of the court-house, where the snow was trodden to the solid consistency of a pavement. The noon recess was nearly over, and all were waiting for the judge and his galaxy of legal lights.

Ed Rankin, a young ranchman from over beyond Emmaville, finding himself among strangers, and being as shy as a coyote, turned in at the court-house door, and was making his way toward the big airtight stove, when he observed that the room was not empty, as he had supposed it would be. In a remote corner sat a sorry-looking group, a woman and three children, their shrinking figures thinly clad, their eyes, red with crying or exposure, glancing apprehensively from side to side. The youngest of the group was a boy of ten; he, like all the others, had the look of a hunted creature.

Rankin walked across the room, his footsteps muffled by the sawdust with which the floor was plentifully strewn. Yet, soft as his tread was, the four shivering creatures were visibly startled by it. The young ranchman passed within "the bar" and stood with his back to the stove. He tried to whistle, but he could not do it. He looked about the room, seeking some object to divert his thoughts. Bare walls and rows of empty benches outside the bar; within that mystic boundary all the usual furnishings of the immediate precincts of justice. Three days' steadfast contemplation of these humble stage-properties had pretty well exhausted their interest, and Rankin's attention again wandered to the group in the corner. The more the dry scorching heat of the stove penetrated his own person the colder the woman and children looked. At last he blurted out, in the manner peculiar to him when suffering from embarrassment, "Say, ma'am, why don't you come and get warm?"

The woman started and looked over her shoulder before she answered.

"I guess we'd rather stay where we are," she said.

Incapable of withstanding such a rebuff, Rankin slouched across the room and stood in the open door-way. A three-seated ranch-wagon, drawn by a pair of ill-matched but brisk little broncos, was just coming along the street. The heavy wheels creaked and groaned over the snow, and then stopped before the court-house. The whole "court," which was sojourning with a well-to-do ranchman a couple of miles out of town, had arrived, plentifully wrapped up in mufflers of every color of the rainbow. As judge and lawyers descended before the temple of justice, it was curious to observe how, in spite of bemuffled heads and crimson noses, these representatives of a different civilization contrasted with the prairie people. There was the grave, keen-eyed judge, of humane and dignified bearing; there was the district attorney, shrewd and alert, a rising man; and there were lawyers from Denver and Springtown: all this ability and training placed at the service of the remote little prairie community.

"What's on this afternoon, judge?" asked Merriam, the store-keeper, with the well-bred familiarity of a prominent citizen.

"The Rumpety case, I believe."

"Not much good, I suppose."

"I'm afraid not," said the judge, glancing as he passed at the shivering woman and children. "I wonder if they have had any dinner," he queried, with sudden solicitude.

"Yes. My wife looked after that. She took 'em over a mess of stuff. They looked scared of their lives to eat it, but it's safe inside of 'em now." And the kind, red-faced storekeeper hugged himself visibly at the thought.

The court assembled.

Within the bar a group of chairs had already been taken possession of by the dames and belles of Sandoria and the neighboring ranches, to whom court-week is the equivalent of carnival, opera, or races in more favored regions; and where, indeed, could a more striking drama be presented for their delectation than here, where friends and neighbors played the leading parts?

The court assembled; lawyers and stenographer took their places; the clerk stood in readiness; the judge mounted the bench; and lo! the historic dignity of a court of justice had descended upon that rude stage, and all was ready for whatever comedy or tragedy might be to enact upon it.

The judge, referring to the list, announced that the next case would be "The people of the State of Colorado against Dennis Rumpety." Then, being called, Dennis Rumpety walked down the court-room and passed within the bar.

The man looked fifty or thereabouts; a short, thick-set figure, with a large head covered with thick iron-gray hair. The smooth-shaven face was a peculiar one, being broad in its outline, with the features, especially the eyes, small and close together. The short, bushy eyebrows met above a fine, clean-cut nose; the jaws were heavy and brutal; yet the menace of the face was not in these, but in the thin straight lips which closed like the shears of Fate. A cruel smile gathered about the lips as he answered the questions of the court. There was something peculiarly incongruous in the jovial, happy-go-lucky name to which this man answered.

"Mr. Rumpety," the judge asked, "have you provided yourself with legal advice?"

"No, your honor," the man replied, with a strong north-country brogue. "No, sorr! I've got no use for the laryers."

"You are prepared, then, to argue your own case?"

"I lave me case in the hands of me fahmily. Their testimony will clear me from the false accusations of me innimies. If thim as——"

"That will do, Mr. Rumpety."

"If thim as are——"

"Mr. Rumpety, that will do."

The judge invariably spoke in a low tone of voice, but it was not often that he had to repeat himself; the voice of authority has a way of making itself heard.

Rumpety locked his lips again and took his seat. The jury was called, Ed Rankin's name among the first.

Rankin had not heard a word about the Rumpety case, yet the nature of it was as clear to him as daylight. This brute was up for cruelty to those four shivering creatures on the bench in the corner, and they would never dare testify against their persecutor. In all those abject countenances there was not one ray of courage visible.

Now began the process of weeding out the jury, which, when it came his turn, Rumpety performed with a free hand. The prosecution having dismissed some half-dozen men and "passed" the jury, the defendant began his inquisition. He asked no unnecessary questions, gave no reasons for his prejudices, but with unalterable decision declared, "I won't have that man on the jury at all!" or, "I don't want him: he may go."

Rankin was among the first to be thus summarily rejected, and he joined the crowd outside the bar, only half contented with his release. He would have liked "to convict that beast."

It was not much of a compliment to be retained on Rumpety's jury. As often as, in his cursory examination, he came upon an ignorant or brutish face, a complacent smile played about the thin lips, and he said, "That man'll do. He'll do."

And now the trial began. People from the town of Wolverton testified that the boy Victor—poor little defeated Victor!—had appeared in the street fleeing from his home, four miles away, crying that his father was going to kill him. The child's ear had been frightfully bruised and swollen, and there were unmistakable marks of ill usage upon him. The man Rumpety's barbarity was notorious on all the countryside, and this was the third successive year he had been up before the court. It had never been possible to secure a conviction, owing to the dogged persistence of his victims in perjuring themselves in his favor.

As one after another of the trembling family shuffled up to the witness-seat and swore, with hanging head and furtive eyes, that Dennis Rumpety was a kind husband and father, who never punished them "more than was just," this model parent sat with gleaming eyes and an evil smirk, resting his case upon the "testimony of his fahmily." If, occasionally, the witness hesitated, Rumpety would lift his eyebrows or make a slight movement which sent the blood into the pale cheek of woman or child and an added tremor into the faint voice. More than once the district attorney sprang to his feet and cried, "Your honor, I object to this man's intimidating the people's witnesses;" but the intimidation was too subtle to seize hold upon.

Ed Rankin wondered what would happen if somebody should hit the wretch a whack over the head every time he raised an eyebrow. Somehow it struck him that the law was hardly equal to tackling "that kind."

The cross-examination brought out no new evidence.

The district attorney was especially persistent with the boy, the immediate victim in this instance.

"Victor," he said, "state to the jury why you accused your father of abusing you and wanting to kill you, if it wasn't true."

The boy hesitated.

"Don't be afraid to speak the truth. He sha'n't hurt you."

But the boy knew better.

"Sure I lied," he said.

"And what did you lie for?"

"Because I was mad."

"But what made you get mad with such a kind father?"

"Because he came into the cellar and found fault wid me about the potatoes."

"Had he reason to find fault with you?"

The boy looked at his father: one look was enough.

"Yes, sorr. I had an ugly fit on."

Poor little shrinking shivering wretch, with his cowed figure and trembling lips! It is safe to say that an "ugly fit" seized upon every person listening to that futile confession.

Ed Rankin felt the blood boil in his veins. He glanced at Myra Beckwith, sitting among the audience within the bar. She was leaning forward with her hands clasped tightly, watching the boy. There were tears in her eyes, and Rankin blessed her for them.

It was clear that the district attorney himself was a good deal wrought upon, for his manner grew quieter every minute. He sat with his head slightly forward, looking out from under his brows straight into the miserable little face before him. His questions came short and incisive.

"State to the jury again how you hurt your ear."

"Sure I fell off a horse."

"Hm! You fell off a horse and lit on your ear?"

"Yes, sorr."

"And this ingenious tumble took place before the racket in the cellar?"

"Yes, sorr."

"How long before?"

"I guess about a week."

"Your mother testified that it happened the same morning."

"Yes, sorr. It was the same marning."

The poor little chap's answers were getting almost inaudible. He looked spent with misery and apprehension. He gave no sign of tears. His wan, pinched little face looked as if he had cried so much in his short life that there was no longer any relief in it. He was soon dismissed, and went shuffling back to his cold corner.

The woman and girls proved no more available for purposes of justice than the boy. Their testimony was perfectly consistent and absolutely unshakable; it had been thoroughly beaten into them, that was clear.

When it came time for Rumpety to plead his own cause before the jury he proved quite equal to the situation. He planted himself before them and harangued them like any third-rate criminal lawyer.

"I tell you, gen'lmen," he declared, "it's no small by's job to keep that fahmily in arder!" and he proceeded to describe them as a cantankerous lot, to be ruled only by that ideal justice tempered by mercy which he was apparently a master in dispensing.

At the last he waxed pathetic, and, in a tearful voice, somewhat at odds with his dry, wicked little eyes, he cried, "I've got a row to hoe, that if there was a lot of men in it they'd have hanged themselves from a rafter!"

With which magnificent climax and a profound bow and flourish, he took his seat, and assumed a pose of invulnerable righteousness from which no invectives nor innuendoes of the prosecuting attorney could move him. He had rested his case on the testimony of his "fahmily," and he knew his jury too well to have much anxiety about their verdict.

The lamps had been lighted long ago, and the early winter evening had set in. The court took a recess, waiting the verdict of the jury. This was the last case on the trial docket for that day.

Rumpety was standing, broad and unblushing, before the stove, whither, in obedience to his commands, his wife and children had also repaired. With true prairie courtesy the men had placed chairs for the Rumpety "fahmily," and an unsuccessful attempt was made to converse with them on indifferent topics.

Rumpety stood, plainly gloating over his victims, the queer gleam in his eyes growing more intense every minute.

Mrs. Rumpety did not share her husband's confidence in the issue. Once, when the judge spoke a kind word to her, she muttered, "Ach, your honor! don't let 'em put the costs on us! Don't let 'em put the costs on us!" and Rankin, standing by, realized with a pang that even this misery could be increased.

The situation was oppressive. Rankin sauntered out of the room and out of the court-house, closing the door behind him. The air was intensely cold; the stars glittered sharply. He liked it outside; he felt the same relief and exhilaration which he had experienced when he first took possession of his "claim," three years before, and felt himself lord over the barren sweep of prairie. There had been hardship in it; the homely comforts of his father's little down-east farm were lacking,—but it was freedom. Freedom! It used to seem to Rankin, before he knew Myra Beckwith, that freedom was all he wanted in life. This shy, awkward, long-limbed fellow had desired nothing so much as room enough, and he had wrested it from Fate.

He wondered, as he stood out under the stars, why Mrs. Rumpety and her children did not run away. The world was big enough and to spare. They would probably starve, to be sure; but starvation was infinitely better than bondage.

The door at his elbow closed sharply, and a voice cried,—

"Hullo, Rank! did you know that those blamed idiots had acquitted him?"

"I knew they would," Rankin answered, with a jerk which betokened suppressed emotion.

"There's nothing left now but lynching," his friend continued. It was Ray Dolliber, one of the more reckless spirits.

Rankin grunted in a non-committal manner.

"Say, Rank, would you lend a hand?"

"I guess not," Rankin replied, slowly, as if deliberating the question.

"Why not?"

"I never did believe in lynching."

"What's the matter with lynching?"

"Tain't fair play. Masked men, and a lot of 'em, onto one feller."

Dolliber waxed sarcastic.

"P'raps you think it's fair play for a great brute of a man to bully a woman and six children."

"P'raps I do," said Rankin, still deliberating, "but I guess 'tain't likely."

Another man came out of the court-house, leaving the door open behind him. They could see Rumpety pulling on a thick overcoat and winding his ears and throat in a heavy muffler. "Come along," he swaggered, with a flourish of the arms; and woman and children, unencumbered by other wraps than those they had worn all day, followed abjectly and made their way after him to the shed where the team was tied.

"I say, Dolliber, did they say it was fourteen miles to their ranch?"

"Yes."

"South, wasn't it?"

"Yes."

"They'll have the wind in their faces."

"You bet!"

A few minutes later the Rumpety wagon went creaking and groaning past the court-house.

Ed Rankin stepped inside and got his leather jacket and woollen muffler. He met the jury straggling out with the crestfallen air of men conscious of an inglorious performance. The judge and the district attorney stood just within the door, waiting for the ranch-wagon.

"They say," said the district attorney, "that Rumpety never does a stroke of work."

"Saves up his strength for bullying his family," the judge remarked. "He takes good care of himself. Did you see how warmly he was dressed?"

"Yes, curse him!"

"It would be a mercy if the others were to freeze to death on the way home."

"Seems likely enough, too; but it would be rather hard on the three little brats waiting at the ranch for their mother."

Rankin, meanwhile, had got himself equipped for his long ride.

There was to be a dance in the court-house that evening, and some men were sweeping the sawdust into a corner and setting the benches against the wall.

"Ain't you goin' to stay for the dance, Ed?" one of them asked. "The girls are all coming."

Rankin felt himself blush ignominiously.

"No," he growled. "I've got some work to do to-night."

"What, at the ranch?"

Rankin paused to take account with his conscience. Being a down-easter, he liked to keep on good terms with that monitor. But



conscience had no fault to find as he presently answered, "Yes, at the ranch."

He strode out of the court-house with a tread very different from his usual slouching gait. Out in the shed he found his bronco sniffing ruefully at an empty dinner-bag. But she whinnied pleasantly at his approach. Five minutes later horse and rider were off at a swinging pace, headed not for their own ranch, which lay twelve miles to the northward. Straight in the teeth of the wind they travelled; in the teeth of the south wind, that stung their faces like a whip-lash.

Before very long they sighted the Rumpety wagon showing plainly against the snow in the starlight. The road went most of the way down-hill, and wagon and bronco made good speed. The air grew colder every minute.

"About ten below, shouldn't you say, Pincher?"

Pincher tossed her tousled mane affirmatively.

They kept about forty rods behind the team, which went at a steady rate.

"I say, Pincher, the old beast must be laying it onto them horses, to make 'em go like that."

This time Pincher merely laid an ear back in token of sympathy.

"We'll give him a worse trouncing than that, though. Eh, Pincher?"

And Rankin fumbled with cold fingers at the whip-handle in his pocket. The reins lay across Pincher's neck. Rankin did not want his hands to get too cold "for business."

On and on they pounded through the snow; colder and colder it grew. There was a shiver in the stars themselves, and only the snow looked warm.

"If I wasn't so all-fired mad, Pincher, I believe 'twould seem kind o' cold."

At these words Pincher took a spurt and had to be held in, lest they should overtake the wagon.

They had crossed the railroad, leaving Wolverton with its handful of twinkling lights to the eastward, and now a line of the Peak was gleaming, a narrow white crescent, above the long, low rise of ground to the west. Once they passed a depression through which the great dome of snow towered in all its grandeur; but that was only for a moment. Rankin's heart beat high at sight of it.

"There's a way out of 'most every place," he muttered, below his breath.

The last three miles of the way the cold had got such a grip on him that he desisted from further social amenities. Pincher quite understood his silence, though she, with her furry coat and hard exercise, was not as near freezing as he.

At length they perceived, close to the road, a dim light shining from a single point in a huddled group of buildings. The wagon turned into a corral, close to a tumble-down shanty, and as Rankin rode up to the opening the children were just disappearing in at the door, while the woman slowly and painfully climbed down over the wheel. Rumpety stood by, jeering at her slow progress.

"Come, horry a little, me foine lady," Rankin heard him say. "Horry, or I'll come and give ye a lift ye'll not thank me for!"

The poor creature's dress had caught in something, and she stood an instant on the hub.

With a sudden movement the brute raised the long whip he held in his hand and gave her a stinging blow across the shoulders. There was a faint moan, a sound of tearing cotton, and the woman fell in a heap to the ground. In another instant she had scrambled to her feet and fled limping into the house.

Ed Rankin felt the blood rush to his heart and then go tingling down into his finger-tips; but he made no sound nor sudden movement. With his teeth set hard, his hand clutching his cow-hide whip, he got off his horse and stood on the ground.

"I guess I'll wait till he's given the critters their supper," he muttered in Pincher's ear. "He might forget to do it after I'm done with him."

He stood looking into the enclosure while Rumpety unharnessed "the critters" and put them up in an open shed.

The corral was a comfortless, tumble-down place. The outlines of the crazy huts and sheds which enclosed it on three sides showed clear in the starlight. A gaunt plough-horse stood motionless in the cold shelter of a skeleton hay-wagon; in one corner a drinking-trough gleamed, one solid mass of ice. And now across this dreary, God-forsaken stage passed the warmly-clad, stalwart figure that Fate was waiting for. Rankin noted that he held the whip still in his hand as he made for the door of the cabin.

Suddenly Rankin blocked his path.

"*You cur!*"

The words were flung like a missile into the face of the brute.

With a cry of inarticulate rage Rumpety raised his long whip, and then, coward that he was, let it fall.

Rankin never had a very clear idea of what happened next. Somehow or other he had torn the coat off the man's back, had bound him with the lasso to a corner of the hay-wagon, and was standing over him, cow-hide in hand, panting with rage and the desire for vengeance. The gaunt horse had moved off a few paces, and stood like an apparition, gazing with spectral indifference at the scene.

Rankin raised his arm and brought the whip-lash whistling down upon the broad shoulders. There was a strange guttural sound, and the figure before him seemed to collapse and sink, a dead weight, down into the encircling rope. Rankin's arm was arrested in mid-air.

"Stand up, you hound, or I'll murder you!" he hissed between his teeth.

But the figure hung there like a log. The spectral horse sniffed strangely.

A swift horror seized upon Rankin. He grasped the heavy shoulder and shook it roughly. It was like shaking—hush! he dared not think what!

Rankin flung his whip to the ground, and wildly, feverishly, untied the rope. It was a difficult thing to do, the sinking of the body

having tightened the knots. At last they yielded, and the dead weight tumbled in a heap before him. Even in his wild horror Rankin thought how the woman had fallen just so in a heap on the ground a few minutes before. The thought put life into his heart.

The gaunt horse had taken a step forward and was sniffing at that heap on the ground, mouthing the limp trousers: a few wisps of hay had clung to them. Rankin watched the weird scene. He knew that that was a dead man before him; nothing could make that surer.

He tried to lift the body and carry it toward the house; he could not do it. It was not the weight, it was the repulsion that lamed him.

He stalked to the cabin and flung open the door. The woman crouched in a corner with her six children about her; seven pitiful scared faces were lifted to his. He stepped in and closed the door behind him.

"Dennis Rumpety is dead," he stated, in a hard, unnatural voice. It seemed to him as if those awful words must echo round the globe, rousing all the powers of the land against him, striking terror to the hearts at home.

The woman glanced about her with wandering eyes. Then she shook her head.

"Dinnis Rumpety? Sure he'll niver be dead!"

"I tell you Dennis Rumpety is dead. I have killed him!"

"You!" she shrieked. "The saints preserve ye!"

It was a ghastly work to get that dishonored body across the corral while the spectral horse came sniffing after. Rankin wondered whether the dishonored soul could be far away. He wondered that the woman and children did not seem to dread being left alone with —it. He did not know how futile ghostly horrors seemed, as compared with those horrors they had thrust out.

As Pincher bore him back over the fourteen miles thither where justice awaited him, Rankin was a prey to two alternating regrets. At one moment he wished he had not said, "I'll murder you!" In the next turn of thought he wished it had been murder in the first degree, that the penalty might have been death rather than imprisonment.

He did not allow himself to think of Myra Beckwith; his mind felt blood-stained, no fit place for the thought of her. There, where the thought of her had shone for months, a steady, heart-warming flame, was only a dull desolation which he dared not face.

As he rode up the deserted street of Sandoria a strong desire possessed him to keep on to the north and have one more night of freedom on his own ranch; but that would have been a cruelty to Pincher. He put her up in the shed and gave her the next day's dinner which he had brought with him that morning in case there should be a dance to keep him over-night. Then he took a long, deep breath of the icy air and passed into the court-house.

Inside, the atmosphere seemed suffocating. The room was so crowded that he did not find Myra's face anywhere. The sheriff was among the dancers, but the fiddles were winding up the set with a last prolonged squeak.

As the scraping ceased, Rankin stood before the sheriff. In the

sudden pause of sound and motion his voice sounded distinctly throughout the room.

"I have just killed Dennis Rumpety," he said.

For ten seconds there was absolute silence; then a rough voice growled, "Thunder! But you done a good thing!"

Upon that everybody began talking at once, and in the midst of the clamor Ed Rankin, the man who loved freedom better than life, was formally placed under arrest.

His trial came off the next day but one. The coroner's inquest had shown death by apoplexy, caused probably by a paroxysm of rage. The jury rendered a verdict of "involuntary manslaughter." The sentence was the lowest the law allows: namely, one day's imprisonment with hard labor.

This unlooked-for clemency staggered the prisoner. Oblivious of every fact but the terrible one that Dennis Rumpety had died by his hand, he had nerved himself for what he believed would be his death-blow. The tension had been too great; he could not bear its sudden removal.

"Say, your honor," he cried, regardless of court etiquette,—“say, your honor, couldn't you lay it on a little heavier?"

"The court sees no reason for altering its decision," his honor replied, gravely, passing on to the delivery of the next sentence.

But after the court had adjourned, the judge stepped up to the prisoner and said, kindly, "I wouldn't take it too hard, if I were you, Rankin. We all know that there was no murder in your heart."

"Yes, there was, your honor. Yes, there was."

"At any rate, the man's death was clearly not your deed. It was the hand of the Lord that did it."

"I don't know, your honor," Rankin persisted. "It feels to me as though it was me that done it."

The judge and the lookers-on were puzzled by this persistency. It did not seem in character. For the first time in his life, Rankin felt the need of words. The moral perplexity was too great for him to deal with; he was reaching out for something to take hold of, a thing which his self-contained, crudely disciplined nature had never craved before.

"It's an awful thing to send a soul to hell," he muttered.

Then, in his extremity, he felt a soft touch upon his arm. Myra Beckwith stood beside him.

"Ed," she said, with the sweet seriousness which had first attracted him, and now at last there was the tone in her voice which he would have given his life to hear,—“Ed, think of the seven souls you have delivered out of hell! I was over to see them yesterday."

The consolation of that voice and touch calmed his troubled spirit, restored him to himself; the nightmare of the last two days faded and slid away. He stood a moment in awkward silence, while Myra's hand rested upon his arm; then, before them all he laid his hand upon it, and, with the solemnity of a priest before the altar, he said, "I guess it was the Lord that done it, after all!"

*Anna Fuller.*

## THE NEW NORTHWEST PASSAGE TO THE ORIENT.

IT has been very well said that the Canadian Pacific Railway was a national enterprise, is a national highway, and will be a national heirloom; and yet there were many times during the various stages of its promotion and prosecution when, judged according to all human standards, the chances seemed to be ten to one that it would prove the cause of national ruin, perchance irreparable.

Certainly, for a colony not overburdened with cash, and having a population numbering less than six million souls, thinly scattered across a continent, to undertake the longest continuous line of railway yet constructed, for the purpose of binding her sundered provinces together, was one of those daring enterprises the wisdom of which can be justified only by their success, and it is pleasant to have the knowledge that in this case the results have, to quote the phrase of the market, "exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the promoters."

One requires to exercise a vast deal of self-repression to avoid dropping into statistics in dealing with such a subject as this, there were so many marvels in connection with the construction of the Canadian Pacific that can be properly exploited only through the medium of arithmetical symbols. But the editorial blue pencil is a thing to be deeply respected, and to obviate excuse for its exercise the seductive statistics will be sternly shut out from this article.

A few dates and prefatory data may, however, be permitted. British Columbia was the immediate cause of the Canadian Pacific, as this otherwise isolated province made it the essential condition of her joining the Dominion, in 1871, that the railway should be begun at once and be completed within ten years.

The task of fulfilling this national contract was a mighty one; and three companies were formed and failed, and one government fell from power in trying to carry it out, with the result that British Columbia at last, in 1875, had to consent to a ten years' extension of the time allowed. Even then construction proceeded very slowly and spasmodically until 1878, when Sir John Macdonald regained office and put new life into the work. Two years later he succeeded in transferring the bulk of the enterprise to a syndicate of Canadian, American, and European capitalists, out of which developed in due time the present corporation, and this company went at the work with such extraordinary vigor that their entire portion of it was completed in less than half the time stipulated, and the government, not to be outdone, took only a few months over the five years to finish up its part. Thus it came about that in June, 1886, the first through-train for the Pacific coast left Montreal, and safely accomplished the most memorable railway journey in the history of Canada.

By that time the company, though scarce five years old, was in sole possession of nearly five thousand miles of railway fully equipped and in capital working order, for whose panting engines and luxurious

Pullmans and gaping freight-cars there was, strange to say, already waiting a large and profitable traffic in goods and passengers.

The subsequent eight years have been marked by an enormous extension of the system and development of business. Not content with a practical command of the situation in Canada, the company reached out its arms for the teas and silks of China and Japan on the one hand and the products of the European marts and factories on the other. The main line was extended eastward from Montreal to a connection with the railway system of the Maritime Provinces, while a superb line of steamers, to which further reference will be made, was set running between Vancouver and Yokohama, and the day is possibly not far distant when another line of ocean greyhounds will speed from Halifax to Liverpool, and thus complete the chain of connection between Yokohama and London.

In addition to this a line has been built from Sudbury to Sault Ste. Marie at the outlet of Lake Superior, where a fine steel bridge effects a connection with two important American lines leading westward,—one to St. Paul and Minneapolis and thence across Dakota, and the other through the numberless iron-mines of the Marquette and Gogebic districts to Duluth. Still another line carries the company's cars from Toronto to Detroit, where the way is open for them to Chicago, St. Louis, and the great Mississippi valley.

By these extensions and connections the Canadian Pacific has amply earned the right to be considered one of the greatest railway systems in the world, and besides that, owing to the homogeneity of its management, it is probably unsurpassed for economy in working expenses, achieved without any sacrifice in the matter of the comfort and safety of the passengers carried, or expedition in the transport of freight.

From the earliest days of its inception until some time subsequent to the laying of the last rail there were would-be prophets of evil persistently foretelling that the earnings would never be sufficient to pay for the oil necessary to lubricate the axles of the rolling stock. As an answer to this, the balance-sheet for the year 1893 showed total earnings of \$20,962,317, which after payment of all working charges left a net profit amounting to no less than \$7,741,416.

To the officials and stock-holders, the economical management of the road and the securing of good dividends are doubtless matters of far livelier interest than all the magnificence of the Selkirks or the marvels of Japan; but in the eyes of the great public, to whom railways simply furnish facilities for sight-seeing, the Canadian Pacific is notable because it has unlocked one of nature's most glorious treasure-houses of beauty and offers a new and supremely attractive highway to the Orient.

One commanding advantage that it possesses over all transcontinental rivals I must not fail to mention. There are no dreary distances of desert, no depressing leagues of sage-bush and alkali, to be traversed. From the time that the train pulls out of Winnipeg until the huge Mogul engine begins to push its panting way up among the foot-hills of the Rocky Mountains, there is not one tie embedded in barren ground. The whole illimitable prairie, if not already under



cultivation, is simply waiting to be asked for the harvest it lies ready to yield.

Along this thousand miles of railway are strung many places of promise: Portage-la-Prairie, the centre of a prosperous farming region; Brandon, big with elevators and flour-mills; the famous Bell farm, well-nigh as large as a German principality, and yielding a far better revenue; Regina, the ambitious capital of the Northwest Territories, where the Mounted Police may be seen in their glory; Moosejaw and Medicine Hat, two flourishing towns that will no doubt ere long in very self-respect be applying to Parliament for more elegant and euphonious titles; and Calgary, snuggling at the base of the Rockies, three thousand feet nearer the clouds than Montreal, and over four thousand feet above sea-level.

But it is only after the train has left Calgary behind and is well on its way towards Banff that the scenic riches of the route break upon the traveller in all their splendor. Thenceforward until he reaches the Pacific he is passing through a sea of mountains, where serrated peaks and vast pyramids of rock with curiously contorted and folded strata are followed by gigantic castellated masses, down whose gleaming sides the snow-white glaciers, like the water-falls of Tennyson's Lotus Land, "to fall, and pause, and fall do seem," or the cascades, "like a downward smoke, slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn do go," while others, yet again,

Through wavering lights and shadows break,  
Rolling a troubled sheet of foam below.

Amidst such sublime scenery as this, before whose grandeur Mont Blanc and the Matterhorn must perforce bow their humbled heads, Coleridge might have caught inspiration for a yet nobler hymn than that which he penned in the Vale of Chamouni. Even as it is, his glowing lines seem strikingly appropriate:

Ye ice-falls! Ye that from the mountain's brow  
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—  
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,  
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!  
Motionless torrents! Silent cataracts!  
Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven?

I am sorry for the passenger who is in too much of a hurry to linger for a few days at Banff. It is a place of peculiar interest. Within easy reach of the home-like hotel provided by the railway company are the Canadian National Park, inside whose ample boundaries may be found every possible variety of wonderful and charming scenery, the renowned mineral springs, which have already brought back health and strength to thousands of sufferers, and, for the mountain-climber and sportsman, unlimited scope for the satisfying of their lofty ambitions.

Not content with the apparently inexhaustible wealth of natural beauty already at their command, the company have been extending their explorations into the surrounding regions, with the happy result

of discovering a trinity of mountain lakes so lovely as to beggar description. These are Lake Louise, a full thousand feet above the line of railway; Lake Agnes, nearly two thousand feet higher still; and then, five hundred feet below Lake Agnes, which feeds it by a torrent from its own pure bosom, lies Mirror Lake, a perfect circle of pellucid water, fringed with trees that with the blue dome of heaven are mirrored in its depths.

But, after all, the chief interest taken by the world in general in the Canadian Pacific to-day is based upon the fact that it offers tourists from the Old World and the New alike the shortest and pleasantest route to the marvellous, mysterious Far East, towards which all eyes are for the moment turned. Time and distance alike have been reduced to the very verge of extinction by modern machinery, and the trip from New York to Yokohama takes little longer now than did the voyage from Liverpool to New York but a few years ago. In fact, it is possible, with only a two months' holiday at one's disposal, to leave New York, cross the continent and the Pacific, spend a full four weeks seeing the lions of the land of the chrysanthemum, and return to New York without exceeding the time limit.

In order to perfect their connection with the Orient, the Canadian Pacific Company have had built for them at Barrow-in-Furness three steamships which are the supreme efforts of the master-builders of that birthplace of marine marvels. Four hundred and eighty feet in length, and fifty-one feet beam, with hurricane deck, cabins, and state-rooms amidships, they furnish abundant space, air, and security to each of the hundred and fifty cabin passengers that can be carried. Electric lights and electric fans give brilliancy and coolness, while Chinese servants in snowy blouses minister silently with velvet tread, and nothing is lacking in the way of luxurious comfort. These steamers do justice to their imposing names of "Empress of India," "Empress of China," and "Empress of Japan." They are each of six thousand tons burden, and are painted pure white, which adds greatly to their beauty.

It was a proud day for the company when, thanks to these steamers and to the despatch shown by the various railroads interested, the *London Times* was able to say that "the delivery of mails in London within twenty-one days of their leaving Yokohama is a feat never before accomplished, sufficiently remarkable in itself, and pregnant with untold issues for the future of the British Empire."

The itinerary of these mails is worth giving in outline. The Empress of Japan left Yokohama in the morning of August 19, 1891, and reached Victoria, British Columbia, before daybreak of August 29. By noon the mails were at Vancouver, and an hour later they started eastward on a special train that whirled them to Brockville, Ontario, in seventy-seven hours. Having been ferried across the St. Lawrence, they were taken up by the New York Central, and the three hundred miles to New York accomplished in seven hours, thus enabling them to be placed on board the City of New York, which sailed an hour later with them for Liverpool.

Many precious English lives, and over one million pounds sterling of

English gold, were expended within the past century in fruitless efforts to find a short straight route to the Indies through the Arctic regions. Now, even though the utter impracticability of such a short cut were not sufficiently demonstrated, there would no longer be any need for it, for in the Canadian Pacific Railway and its steamship connections the British Empire is furnished with a highway to the Orient, over her own territory, surpassingly better than any possible Northwest Passage.

*J. Macdonald Oxley.*

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DUSK IN THE DESERT.

THE Wind of the Desert is calling me.  
Oho, for a comrade so wild and free!  
I would that my laggard feet might fly  
As the skurrying clouds in the darkening sky  
To the wide, brown spaces that stretch afar,  
Unmarred by a trodden roadway's scar;  
Unsmirched by the smoke from labor's den,  
And the struggling breath of toil-strangled men;  
With a silence deep as the calm of death,  
Save for racing winds' exultant breath.

I drink, O Desert, this breath of thine,  
As an eager Sybarite quaffs his wine;  
And I lift my weary lids to gaze,  
Wide-eyed and glad, o'er thy boundless ways,  
To where I can step from thine utmost rim  
Into the skylands, gray and dim;  
Man's dull old world, more dim and gray,  
Fading behind me far away.  
Thought and trouble and care fade, too;  
I live, O Desert and Wind, with you.

Oh, follow, follow, and ne'er turn back  
On a trail that winds like a serpent's track,  
Where the dry, brown grasses rustle and break  
Like the subtle z-z of the rattlesnake,  
But the yellow curls of the gramma there  
Wave like the rings of a lost love's hair.

Whirling along in goblin glee,  
A gray-polled tumble-weed challenges me;  
I follow its gnome-like lead to where  
The cactus offers its dull-red pear,

That gives me thought of a chalice grim,  
Filled with blood to its thorny rim ;  
Of the Desert's vanished sons ? Who knows ?  
Of trespassers in her sacred close,  
Who marked, with their whitening bones, the curse  
That Nature's heart against man doth nurse ?

O thou Sphinx Desert, if savage dearth  
Of softer graces mark lowly birth,  
What of thy silence proud, serene  
As the mocking calm of a musing queen ?  
Death to thy serfs or life, what then ?  
Long may they sue thee, gods or men !  
Lo, where they stepped are their hidden graves !  
Lo, where they dwelt, the dry grass waves  
With a rustle of laughter, scarce a sigh,  
E'en when the soft south wind steals by.  
Hark ! Cry of the coyote, or craven world  
Out of our fearless kingdom whirled ?  
As low on the Desert the gray night lies,  
And the light of the love in my collie's eyes  
Is all that may guide me back again  
To the grinding, groaning world of men.

A vision goes with me, O friends of mine,  
O restful Desert and Wind like wine,  
Of the stealthy hosts of gathering snow  
On the gray cloud-deserts lying low,  
Till the blasts that blow east, west, and north  
Shall sound the whistling signal forth  
For the silent, swift advance. Oho !  
To be compassed round by the whirling snow,  
With the world and the sky and the desert gone,  
To move in a white dream on and on,  
Till struggling's bravado, and yielding, love  
For the soft, white foes from the plains above ;  
A draught of their blessed anodyne,  
And the pain of their death-thrust is peace benign.

Life and death in a circle fly.  
Hot suns whiten and parched winds dry ;  
And lo ! once more is the human clod  
Quick with the life of the desert sod.

*M. S. Paden.*

# THE TRESPASSER.\*

## A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TRANSLATION OF A SAVAGE," "PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE," "MRS. FALCHION," "THE CHIEF FACTOR," ETC.

(Concluded from page 702.)

### CHAPTER XVI.

WHEREIN LOVE KNOWS NO LAW SAVE THE MAN'S WILL.

IN another week it was announced that Mademoiselle Victorine would take a month's holiday,—to the sorrow of her chief, and to the delight of Mr. Meyerbeer, who had not yet discovered his man, though he had a pretty scandal well-nigh brewed.

Count Ploaré was no more; Gaston Belward was. Zoug-Zoug was in the country at Fontainebleau, working at his picture. He had left on the morning after Gaston discovered Andrée. He had written, asking his nephew to come for some final sittings. Possibly, he said, Mademoiselle Cérise and others would be down for a Sunday. Gaston had not gone, had briefly declined. His uncle shrugged his shoulders, and went on with other work. It would end in his having to go to Paris and finish the picture there, he said. Perhaps the youth was getting into mischief? So much the better. He took no newspapers.—What did an artist need of them? He did not even read the notices sent by a press-cutting agency. He had a model with him. She amused him for the time, but it was unsatisfactory working on "The King of Ys" from photographs. He loathed it, and gave it up.

One evening Gaston and Andrée met at the Gare Montparnasse. Jacques was gone on, but Annette was there. Meyerbeer was there also, at a safe distance. He saw Gaston purchase tickets, arrange his baggage, and enter the train. He passed the compartment, looking in. Besides the three, there were a priest and a young soldier.

Gaston saw him, and guessed what brought him there. He had an impulse to get out and shake him as would Andrée's cub a puppy. But the train moved off.

Meyerbeer found Gaston's porter. A franc did the business.

"Douarnenez, for Audierne, Brittany," was the legend written in Meyerbeer's note-book. And after that, "Journey twenty hours—change at Rennes, Redon, and Quimpère."

"Too far. I've enough for now," said Meyerbeer, chuckling, as

he walked away. "But I'd give five hundred dollars to know who Zoug-Zoug is. I'll make another try."

So he held his sensation back for a while yet. Of the colony at the Hôtel St.-Malo, not one of the three who knew would tell him. Bagshot had sworn the others to secrecy.

Jacques had gone on with the horses. He was to rent a house, or get rooms at a hotel. He did very well. The horses were stalled at the Hôtel de France. He had rented an old château perched upon a hill, with steps approaching, steps flanking; near it strange narrow alleys, leading where one cared not to search; a garden of pears, and figs, and grapes, and innumerable flowers and an arbor; a pavilion, all windows, over an entrance-way, with a shrine in it,—a bestarred shrine below it; bare floors, simple furniture, primitiveness at every turn.

Gaston and Andrée came, of choice, with a courier in a racketing old diligence from Douarnenez, and they laughed with delight, tired as they were, at the new quarters. It must be a gypsy kind of existence at the most.

There were rooms for Jacques and Annette, who at once set to work with the help of a little Breton maid. Jacques had not ordered a dinner at the hotel, but had got in fresh fish, lobsters, chickens, eggs, and other necessities; and all was ready for a meal which could be got in an hour.

Jacques had now his hour of happiness. He knew not of these morals—they were beyond him; but after a cheerful dinner in the pavilion, with an omelette made by Andrée herself, Annette went to her room and cried herself to sleep. She was civilized, poor soul! and here they were a stone's throw from the curé and the church. Gaston and Andrée, refreshed, travelled down the long steps to the village, over the *place*, along the quay, to the light-house and the beach, through crowds of sardine-fishers and simple hard-tongued Bretons. Cheerful, buoyant at dinner, there now came upon the girl an intense quiet and fatigue. She stood and looked long at the sea. Gaston tried to rouse her.

"This is your native Brittany, Andrée?" he said.

She pointed far over the sea:

"Near that light at Penmark I was born."

"Can you speak the Breton language?"

"Far worse than you speak Parisian French."

He laughed. "You are so little like these people!"

She had vanity. That had been part of her life. Her beauty had brought trade when she was a gypsy; she had been the admired of Paris: she was only twenty-three. Presently she became restless, and shrank from him. Her eyes had a flitting hunted look. Once they met his with a wild sort of pleading or revolt, he could not tell which, and then were continually turned away. If either could have known how hard the little dwarf of sense and memory was trying to tell her something!

This new phase stunned him. What did it mean? He touched her hand. It was hot, and withdrew from his. He put his arm



around her, and she shivered, cringed. But then she was a woman, he thought. He had met one unlike any he had ever known. He would wait. He would be patient. Would she come—home? She turned passively and took his arm. He talked, but he knew he was talking poorly, and at last he became silent also. But when they came to the steep steps leading to the château, he lifted her in his arms, carried her to the house, and left her at their chamber door.

Then he went to the pavilion to smoke. He had no wish to think, —at least of anything but the girl. It was not a time for retrospect, but to accept a situation. The die had been cast. He had followed what?—his nature, his instincts. The consequence?

He heard Andrée's voice. He went to her.

The next morning they were in the garden walking about. They had been speaking, but now both were silent. At last he turned again to her.

"Andrée, who was the other man?" he asked, quietly, but with a strange troubled look in his eyes.

She shrank away, confused, a kind of sickness in her eyes.

"What does it matter?" she said.

"Of course, of course," he returned, in a low, nerveless tone.

They were silent for a long time. Meanwhile, she seemed to beat up a feverish cheerfulness. At last she said,—

"Where do we go this afternoon, Gaston?"

"We will see," he replied.

The day passed, another, and another. The same: she shrank from him, was impatient, agitated, unhappy, went out alone. Annette saw, and mourned, entreated, prayed; Jacques was miserable. There was no joyous passion to redeem the situation for which Gaston had risked so much.

They rode, they took excursions in fishing-boats and little sail-boats. Andrée entered into these with zest,—talked to the sailors, to Jacques, caressed children, and was not indifferent to the notice she attracted in the village,—but was obviously *distracte*. Gaston was patient—and unhappy. So this was the merchandise for which he had bartered all! But he had a will, he was determined; he had sowed, he would reap his harvest to the useless stubble.

"Do you wish to go back to your work?" he asked her, quietly, once.

"I have no work," she answered, apathetically.

He said no more just then.

The days and weeks went by. The situation was impossible, not to be understood. Gaston made his final move. He hoped that perhaps a forced crisis might bring about a change. If it failed—he knew not what.

She was sitting in the garden below,—he alone in the window, smoking. A bundle of letters and papers, brought by the postman that evening, were beside him. He would not open them yet. He felt that there was trouble in them; he saw phrases, sentences, flitting past him. But he would play this other bitter game out first. He let them lie. He heard the bells in the church ringing the village com-

merce done: it was nine o'clock. The picture of that other garden in Paris came to him,—that night when he had first taken this girl into his arms. She sat below talking to Annette and singing a little Breton chanson:

"Parvondt varbondt anan oun,  
Et dic don la lire!  
Parvondt varbondt anan oun,  
Et dic don la la!"

He called down to her presently:

"Andrée!"

"Yes."

"Will you come up for a moment, please?"

"Surely."

She came up, leaving the room door open, and bringing the cub with her. He called Jacques.

"Take the cub to its quarters, Jacques," he said, quietly.

She seemed about to protest, but sat back and watched him. He shut the door,—locked it. Then he came and sat down before her.

"Andrée," he said, "this is all impossible."

"What is impossible?"

"You know well. I am not a mere brute. The only thing that can redeem this life is affection."

"That is true," she said, coldly. "What then?"

"You do not redeem it. We must part."

She laughed fitfully. "We must——?"

She leaned towards him.

"To-morrow evening you will go back to Paris. To-night we part, however; that is, our relations cease."

"I shall go from here when it pleases me, Gaston."

His voice came low and stern, but courteous:

"You must go when I tell you. Do you think I am the weaker?"

He could see her color flying, her fingers lacing and interlacing.

"Aren't you afraid to tell me that?" she said.

"Afraid? Of my life?—you mean that? That you will be as common as that? No: you will do as I tell you."

He fixed his eyes on hers, and held them. She sat, looking. Presently she tried to take her eyes away. She could not. She shuddered and shrank.

He withdrew his eyes for a moment.

"You will go?" he asked.

"It makes no difference," she answered; then added, sharply, "Who are you, to look at me like that, to——"

She paused.

"I am your master!"

He rose. "Good-night," he said, at the door, and went out.

He heard the key turn in the lock. He had forgotten his papers and letters. It did not matter. He would read them when she was gone—if she did go. He was far from sure that he had succeeded. He went to bed in another room, and was soon asleep.

He was waked in the very early morning by feeling a face against his, wet, trembling.

"What is it, Andrée?" he asked.

Her arms ran round his neck:

"*O, mon amour! Mon adoré! Je t'aime! Je t'aime!*"

In the evening of this day she said she knew not how it was, but on that first evening in Audierne there suddenly came to her a strange terrible feeling which seemed to dry up all the springs of her desire for him. She could not help it. She had fought against it, but it was no use; yet she knew that she could not leave him. After he had told her to go, she had had a bitter struggle,—now tears, now anger, and a wish to hate. At last she fell asleep. When she awoke she had changed, she was her old self, as in Paris, when she had first confessed her love. She felt that she must die if she did not go to him. All the first passion returned, the passion that began on the common at Ridley Court.

"And now—now," she said, "I know that I cannot live without you."

It seemed so. Her nature was emptying itself. Gaston had got the merchandise for which he had given a price yet to be known.

"You asked me of the other man," she said. "I will tell you."

"Not now," he said. "You loved him?"

"No—dear God, no!" she answered.

An hour after, when she was in her room, he opened the little bundle of correspondence.—A memorandum with money from his bankers. A letter from Delia, and also one from Mrs. Gasgoyne, saying that they expected to meet him at Gibraltar on a certain day, and asking why he had not written; Delia with sorrowful reserve, Mrs. Gasgoyne with impatience. His letters had missed them; he had written on leaving Paris, saying that his plans were indefinite, but he would write them definitely soon. After he came to Audierne it seemed impossible to write. How could he? No, let the American journalist do it. Better so. Better himself in the worst light, with the full penalty, than his own confession,—in itself an insult. So it had gone on.

He slowly tore up the letters. The next were from his grandfather and grandmother: they did not know yet. He could not read these. A few loving sentences, and then he said,—

"What's the good? Better not."

He tore them up also.

Another—from his uncle. It was brief:

"You've made a sweet mess of it, Cadet. It's in all the papers to-day. Meyerbeer telegraphed it to New York and London. I'll probably come down to see you. I want to finish my picture on the site of the old City of Ys, there at Point du Raz. Your girl can pose with you. I'll do all I can to clear the thing up. But a British M. P.—that's a tough pill for Clapham!"

Gaston's foot tapped the floor angrily. He scattered the pieces of the letter at his feet. Now for the newspapers. He opened *Le Petit Journal*, *Gil Blas*, *Galignani*, and the *New York Tom-Tom*, one by one.

Yes, it was there, with pictures of himself and Andrée. A screaming sensation. Extracts, too, from the English papers by telegram. He read them all unflinchingly. There was one paragraph which he did not understand :

"There was a previous lover, unknown to the public, called Zoug-Zoug."

He remembered that day at the Hôtel St.-Malo.

Well, the bolt was shot: the worst was over. *Quid refert?* Justify himself?

Certainly, to all but Delia Gasgoyne.

Thousands of men did the same,—did it in cold blood, without one honest feeling. He did it, at least, under a powerful influence. He could not help but smile now at the thought of how he had filled both sides of the equation. On his father's side, bringing down the mad record from Naseby; on his mother's, true to the heathen, by following his impulses,—sacred to primitive man, justified by spear, arrow, and a strong arm. Why sheet this home as a scandal? How did they—the libellers—know but what he had married the girl?

Exactly. He would see to that. He would play his game with open sincerity now. He could have wished secrecy for Delia Gasgoyne, and for his grandfather and grandmother,—he was not wilfully brutal,—but otherwise he had no shame at all; he would stand openly for his right. Better one honest passion than a life of deception and miserable compromise. A British M. P.?—He had thrown away his reputation, said the papers. By this?—The girl was no man's wife, he no woman's husband.

Marry her? Yes, he would marry her; she should be his wife. His people? It was a pity. Poor old people!—they would fret and worry. He had been selfish, had not thought of them. Well, who could foresee this outrage of journalism? The luck had been dead against him. Did he not know plenty of men in London—he was going to say the Commons, but he was fairer to the Commons than it, as a body, would be to him—who did much worse? These had escaped: the hunters had been after him. What would he do? Take the whip? He got to his feet with an oath. Take the whip! Never! never! He would fight this thing tooth and nail. Had he come to England to let them use him for a sensation only, a sequence of surprises, to end in a tragedy, all for the furtive pleasure of the British breakfast-table? No, by the Eternal! What had the first Gaston done? He had fought,—fought Villiers and others, and had held up his head beside his king and Rupert till the hour of Naseby.

When the summer was over he would return to Paris, to London. The journalist—punish him? No; too little; a product of his time. But the British people he would fight, and he would not give up Ridley Court. He could throw the game over when it was all his, but never when it was going dead against him.

That speech in the Commons? He remembered gladly that he had contended for conceptions of social miseries according to surrounding influences of growth and situation. He had not played the hypocrite.

No, not even with Delia. He had acted honestly at the beginning, and afterwards he had done what he could so long as he could. It was inevitable that she must be hurt, even if he had married, not giving her what he had given this *dompteuse*. After all, was it so terrible? It could not affect her much in the eyes of the world. And her heart? He did not flatter himself. Yet he knew that it would be the thing—the fallen idol—that would grieve her more than thought of the man. He wished that he could have spared her, in the circumstances. But it had all come too suddenly: it was impossible. He had spared, he could spare, nobody. There was the whole situation.

What now to do?—To remain here while it pleased them, then Paris, then London for his fight.

Three days went round. There were idle hours by the sea, little excursions in a sail-boat to Penmark, and at last to Point du Raz. It was a beautiful day, with a gentle breeze, and the point was glorified. The boat ran in lightly between the steep dark shore and the comb of reef that looked like a host of stealthy pumas crumbling the water. They anchored in the Bay des Trépassés. An hour on shore exploring the caves, and lunching, and then they went back to the boat, accompanied by a Breton sailor, who had acted as guide.

Gaston lay reading,—they were in the shade of the cliff,—while Andrée listened to the Breton telling the legends of the coast. At length Gaston's attention was attracted. The old sailor was pointing to the shore, and speaking in bad French:

"*Voilà*, madame, where the City of Ys stood long before the Bretons came. It was a foolish ride."

"I do not know the story. Tell me."

"There are two or three, but mine is the oldest. A flood came,—sent by the gods, for the woman was impious. The king must ride with her into the sea and leave her there, himself to come back, and so save the city."

The sailor paused to scan the sea: something had struck him. He shook his head. Gaston was watching Andrée from behind his book.

"Well, well," she said, impatiently, "what then? What did he do?"

"The king took up the woman, and rode into the water as far as where you see the great white stone: it has been there ever since. There he had a fight,—not with the woman, but in his heart. He turned to the people, and cried, 'Dry be your streets, and as ashes your eyes for your king!' And then he rode on with the woman till they saw him no more—never!"

Andrée said instantly,—

"That was long ago. Now the king would ride back alone."

She did not look at Gaston, but she knew that his eyes were on her. He closed the book, got up, came forward to the sailor, who was again looking out to sea, and said carelessly over his shoulder,—

"Men who lived centuries ago would act the same now, if they were here."

Her response seemed quite as careless as his:

"How do you know?"

"Perhaps I had an innings then," he answered, smiling whimsically.

She was about to speak again, but the guide suddenly said,—

"You must get away. There'll be a change of wind and a bad cross-current soon."

In a few minutes the two were bearing out,—none too soon, for those pumas crowded up once or twice within a fathom of their deck, devilish and devouring. But they wore away with a capricious current, and down a tossing sea made for Audierne.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE MAN AND THE WOMAN FACE THE INTOLERABLE.

IN a couple of hours they rounded Point de Leroily, and ran for the harbor. By hugging the quay in the channel to the left of the bar, they were sure of getting in, though the tide was low. The boat was docile to the lug-sail and the helm. As they were beating in they saw a large yacht running straight across a corner of the bar for the channel. It was Warren Gasgoyne's Kismet.

The Kismet had put in to Audierne rather than try to pass Point du Raz at night. At Gibraltar a telegram had come telling of the painful sensation, and the yacht was instantly headed for England, Mrs. Gasgoyne crossing the Continent, Delia preferring to go back with her father; his sympathy was more tender. They had seen no newspapers, and they did not know that Gaston was at Audierne. Gasgoyne, knowing, as all the world knew, that there was a bar at the mouth of the harbor, allowed himself, as he thought, sufficient room, but the wind had suddenly drawn ahead, and he was obliged to keep away. Presently the yacht took the ground with great force.

Gasgoyne put the helm hard down, but she would not obey. He tried at once to get in his sails, but the surf was running very strong, and presently a heavy sea broke clean over her. Then came confusion and dismay, the flapping of the wet, half-lowered sails, and the whipping of the slack ropes, making all effort useless. There was no chance of her holding. Foot by foot she was being driven towards the rocks. Sailors stood motionless on the shore. The lifeboat would be of little use: besides, it could not arrive for some time.

Gaston had recognized the Kismet. He turned to Andrée.

"There's danger, but perhaps we can do it. Will you go?"

She flushed.

"Have I ever been a coward, Gaston? Tell me what to do."

"Keep the helm firm, and act instantly on my orders."

Instead of coming round into the channel, he kept straight on past the light-house towards the yacht, until he was something to seaward of her. Then, luffing quickly, he dropped sail, let go the anchor, and unshipped the mast, while Andrée got the oars into the rowlocks. It was his idea to dip under the yacht's stern, but he found himself drifting alongside and in danger of dashing broadside on her. He got an oar and backed with all his strength towards the stern, the anchor hold-



ing well. Then he called to those on board to be ready to jump. Once in line with the Kismet's counter, he eased off the painter rapidly, and now dropped towards the stern of the wreck.

Gaston was quite cool. He did not now think of the dramatic nature of this meeting, apart from the physical danger. Delia also had recognized him, and guessed who the girl was. Not to respond to Gaston's call was her first instinct. But, then, life was sweet. Besides, she had to think of others. Her father, too, was chiefly concerned for her safety and for his yacht. He had almost determined to get Delia on Gaston's boat and himself take the chances with the Kismet; but his sailors dissuaded him, declaring that the chances were against succor.

The only greetings were words of warning and direction from Gaston. Presently there was an opportunity. Gaston called sharply to Delia, and she, standing ready, jumped. He caught her in his arms as she came. The boat swayed as the others leaped, and he held her close meanwhile. Her eyes closed, she shuddered and went white. When he put her down, she covered her face with her hands, trembling. Then suddenly she came huddling in a heap, and burst into tears.

They slipped the painter, a sailor took Andrée's place at the helm, the oars were got out, and they made over to the channel, grazing the bar once or twice, by reason of the now heavy load.

Warren Gasgoyne and Gaston had not yet spoken in the way of greeting. The former went to Delia now and said a few cheery words, but, from behind her handkerchief, she begged him to leave her alone for a moment.

"Nerves, all nerves, Mr. Belward," he said, turning towards Gaston. "But, then, it was ticklish,—ticklish!"

They did not shake hands. Gaston was looking at Delia, and he did not reply.

Mr. Gasgoyne continued:

"Nasty sea coming on; afraid to try Point du Raz. Of course we didn't know you were here."

He looked at Andrée curiously. He was struck by the girl's beauty and force. But how different from Delia!

He suddenly turned, and said bluntly, in a low voice,—

"Belward, what a fool! what a fool! You had it all at your feet: the best,—the very best!"

Gaston answered quietly,—

"It's an awkward time for talking.—The rocks will have your yacht in half an hour."

Gasgoyne turned towards it.

"Yes, she'll get a raking fore and aft." Then he added, suddenly, "Of course you know how we feel about our rescue. It was plucky of you!"

"Pluckier in the girl," was the reply.

"Brave enough!" the honest rejoinder.

Gaston had an impulse to say, "Shall I thank her for you?" but he was conscious how little right he had to be ironical with Warren Gasgoyne, and he held his peace.

While the two were now turned away towards the Kismet, Andrée came to Delia. She did not quite know how to comfort her, but she was a woman, and perhaps a supporting arm would do something.

"There, there, dear," she said, passing a hand round her shoulder, "you are all right now. Don't cry!"

With a gasp of horror, Delia got to her feet, but swayed, and fell fainting—into Andrée's arms.

She awoke near the landing-place, her father beside her. Meanwhile Andrée had read the riddle. As Mr. Gasgoyne bathed Delia's face, and Gaston her wrists, and gave her brandy, she sat still and intent, watching. Tears and fainting! Would she—Andrée—have given way like that in the same circumstances? No. But this girl—Delia—was of a different order: was that it? All nerves and sentiment! At one of those lunches in the grand world she had seen a lady burst into tears suddenly at some one's reference to Senegal. She herself had cried only four times, that she remembered:—when her mother died; when her father was called a thief; when, one day, she suffered the great shame of her life in the mountains of Auvergne; and the night when she waked a second time to her love for Gaston. She dared to call it love, though good Annette had called it a mortal sin.

What was to be done? The other woman must suffer. The man was hers,—hers forever! He had said it: forever. Yet her heart had a wild hunger for that something which this girl had and she had not. But the man was hers! She had won him away from this other.

Delia came upon the quay bravely, passing through the crowd of staring fishermen, who presently gave Gaston a guttural cheer. Three of them, indeed, had been drinking his health. They embraced him and kissed him, begging him to come with them for absinthe. He arranged the matter with a couple of francs.

Then he wondered what now was to be done. He could not insult the Gasgoynes by asking them to come to the château. He proposed the Hôtel de France to Mr. Gasgoyne, who assented. It was difficult to separate here on the quay: they must all walk together to the hotel. Gaston turned to speak to Andrée, but she was gone. She had saved the situation.

The three spoke little, and then but formally, as they walked to the hotel. Mr. Gasgoyne said that they would leave by train for Paris the next day, going to Douarnenez that evening. They had saved nothing from the yacht.

Delia did not speak. She was pale, composed, now. In the hotel Mr. Gasgoyne arranged for rooms, while Gaston got some sailors together, and, in Mr. Gasgoyne's name, offered a price for the recovery of the yacht or of certain things in her. Then he went into the hotel to see if he could do anything further. The door of the sitting-room was open, and, no answer coming to his knock, he entered.

Delia was standing in the window. Against her will her father had gone to find a doctor. Gaston would have drawn back if she had not turned round wearily to him.

Perhaps it were well to get it over now. He came forward. She made no motion.

"I hope you feel better?" he said. "It was a bad accident."

"I am tired and shaken, of course," she responded. "It was very brave of you."

He hesitated, then said,—

"We were more fortunate than brave."

He was determined to have Andrée included. She deserved that : the wrong to Delia was not hers.

But she answered after the manner of a woman :

"The girl—ah, yes, please thank her for us. What is her name?"

"She is known in Audierne—as Madame Belward."

The girl started. Her face had a cold, scornful pride.

"The Bretons, then, have a taste for fiction?"

"No, they speak as they are taught."

"They understand, then, as little as I."

How proud, how ineffably superior she was !

"Be ignorant forever," he answered, quietly.

"I do not need the counsel, believe me."

Her hand trembled, though it rested against the window,—trembled with indignation : the insult of his elopement kept beating up her throat in spite of her.

At that moment a servant knocked, entered, and said that a parcel had been brought for mademoiselle. It was laid upon the table. Delia, wondering, ordered it to be opened. A bundle of clothes was disclosed,—Andrée's ! Gaston recognized them, and caught his breath with wonder and confusion.

"Who has sent them?" Delia said to the servant.

"They come from the Château Ronan, mademoiselle."

Delia dismissed the servant.

"The Château Ronan?" she asked of Gaston.

"Where I am living."

"It is not necessary to speak of this?" She flushed.

"Not at all. I will have them sent back. There is a little shop near by where you can get what you may need."

Andrée had acted according to her lights. It was not an olive-branch, but a touch of primitive hospitality. She was Delia's enemy at sight, but a woman must have linen.

Mr. Gasgoyne entered. Gaston prepared to go.

"Is there anything more that I can do?" he said, as it were, to both.

The girl replied, "Nothing at all, thank you."

They did not shake hands.

Mr. Gasgoyne could not think that all had necessarily ended. The thing might be patched up one day yet. This affair with the dompteuse was mad sailing, but the man might round-to suddenly, and be no worse for the escapade.

"We are going early in the morning," he said. "We can get along all right. Good-by. When do you come to England?"

The reply was prompt : "In a few weeks."

He looked at both. The girl, seeing that he was going to speak further, bowed and left the room.

His eyes followed her. After a moment, he said, firmly,—

"Mr. Gasgoyne, I am going to face all."

"To live it down, Belward?"

"I am going to fight it down."

"Well, there's a difference. You have made a mess of things, and shocked us all. I needn't say what more. It's done, and now you know what such things mean to a good woman—and, I hope also, to the father of a good woman."

The man's voice broke a little. He added,—

"They used to come to swords or pistols on such points. We can't settle it in that way. Anyhow, you have handicapped us to-day." Then, with a burst of reproach, indignation, and trouble, "Great God! as if you hadn't been the luckiest man on earth! Delia, the estate, the Commons,—all for a domptouse!"

"Let us say nothing more," said Gaston, choking down wrath at the reference to Andrée, but sorrowful, and pitying Mr. Gasgoyne. Besides, the man had a right to rail.

Soon after they parted courteously.

Gaston went to the château. As he came up the stone steps he met a procession—it was the feast day of the Virgin—of priests and people and little children, filing up from the village and the sea, singing as they came. He drew up to the wall, stood upon the stone seat, and took off his hat while the procession passed. He had met the curé, first accidentally on the shore, and afterwards in the curé's house, finding much in common: he had known many priests in the North, known much good of them. The curé glanced up at him now as they passed, and a half-sad smile crossed his face. Gaston caught it as it passed. The curé read his case truly enough, and gently enough too. In some wise hour he would plead with Gaston for the woman's soul and his own.

Gaston did not find Andrée at the château. She had gone out alone towards the sea, Annette said, by a route at the rear of the village. He went also, but did not find her. As he came again to the quay he saw the Kismet beating upon the rocks: the sailors had given up any idea of saving her. He stood and watched the sea breaking over her, and the whole scene flashed back on him. He thought how easily he could be sentimental over the thing. But that was not his nature. He had made his bed, but he would not lie in it: he would carry it on his back. They all said that *he* had gone on the rocks. He laughed.

"I can turn that tide: I can make things come my way," he said. "All they want is sensation: it isn't morals that concerns them. Well, I'll give them sensation. They expect me to hide, and drop out of the game. Never—so help me God! I'll play it so they'll forget this."

He rolled and lighted a cigarette, and went again to the château. Dinner was ready,—had been ready for some time. He sat down, and presently Andrée came. There was a look in her face that he could not understand. They ate their dinner quietly, not mentioning the events of the afternoon.

Presently a telegram was brought to him. It read, "Come. My

office, Downing Street, Friday. Expect you." It was signed "Faramond." At the same time came letters: from his grandfather, from Captain Maudsley. The first was stern, imperious, reproachful.—Shame for those that took him in and made him, a ruined reputation, a spoiled tradition: he had been but a heathen after all! There was only left to bid him farewell, and to enclose a cheque for two thousand pounds.

Captain Maudsley called him a fool, and asked him what he meant to do; hoped he would give up the woman at once, and come back. He owed something to his position as Master of the Hounds,—a tradition that oughtn't to be messed about.

There it all was: not a word about radical morality or immorality; but the tradition of Family, the Commons, Master of the Hounds!

But there was another letter. He did not recognize the handwriting, and the envelope had a black edge. He turned it over and over, forgetting that Andrée was watching him. Looking up, he caught her eyes, with their strange, sad look. She guessed what was in these letters. She knew English well enough to understand them. He interpreted her look and pushed them over.

"You may read them, if you wish; but I wouldn't, if I were you."

She read the telegram first, and asked who "Faramond" was. Then she read Sir William Belward's letter, and afterwards Captain Maudsley's.

"It has all come at once," she said: "the girl and these! What will you do? Give 'the woman' up for the honor—of the Master of the Hounds?"

The tone was bitter, exasperating.

Gaston was patient.

"What do you think, Andrée?"

"Oh, it has only begun," she said. "Wait, King of Ys. Read that other letter."

Her eyes were fascinated by the black border. He opened it with a strange slowness. It began without any form of address: it had the superscription of a street in Manchester Square:

"If you were not in deep trouble I would not write. But because I know that more hard things than kind will be said by others, I want to say what is in my heart, which is quick to feel for you. I know that you have sinned, but I pray for you every day, and I cannot believe that God will not answer. Oh, think of the wrong that you have done: of the wrong to the girl, to her soul's good. Think of that, and right the wrong in so far as you can. Oh, Gaston, my brother!—I need not explain why I write thus. My grandfather, before he died, three weeks ago, told me that you knew—and I also have known ever since the day you saved the boy. Oh, think of one who would give years of her life to see you good and noble and happy. . . ."

Then followed a deep, sincere appeal to his manhood, and afterwards a wish that their real relations should be made known to the world if he needed her, or if disaster came; that she might share and comfort his life, whatever it might be. Then again:

"If you love her, and she loves you, and is sorry for what she has done, marry her and save her from everlasting shame. I am staying with my grandfather's cousin, the Dean of Dighbury, the father of the boy you saved. He is very kind, and he knows all. May God guide you aright, and may you believe that no one speaks more truthfully to you than your sorrowful and affectionate sister,

"ALICE WINGFIELD."

He put the letter down beside him, made a cigarette, and poured out some coffee for them both. He was holding himself with a tight hand. This letter had touched him as nothing in his life had done since his father's death. It had nothing of *noblesse oblige*, but straight statement of wrong, as she saw it. And a sister—without an open right to the title; the mere fidelity of blood! His father had brought this sorrowful life into the world, and he had made it more sorrowful—poor little thing—poor girl!

"What are you going to do?" said Andrée. "Do you go back—with Delia?"

He winced. Yet why should he expect of her too great refinement? She had not had a chance, she had not the stuff for it in her veins; she had never been taught. But behind it all was her passion—her love—for him.

"Not with her: you know that's impossible," he answered.

"She would not take you back."

"Probably not. She has pride."

"Pride—*chut!* She'd jump at the chance!"

"That sounds rude, Andrée; and it is contradictory."

"Rude! Well, I'm only a gypsy and a *dompteuse*."

"Is that all, my girl?"

"That's all, now." Then, with a sudden change and a quick sob, "But I may be—Oh, I can't say it, Gaston!" She hid her face for a moment on his shoulder.

"My God!"

He got to his feet. He had not thought of that,—of another besides themselves. He had drifted. A hundred ideas ran back and forth. He went to the window and stood looking out. Alice's letter was still in his fingers.

She came and touched his shoulder.

"Are you going to leave me, Gaston? What does that letter say?"

He looked at her kindly, with a protective tenderness.

"Read the letter, Andrée," he said.

She did so, at first slowly, then quickly, then over and over again. He stood motionless in the window. She pushed the letter between his fingers. He did not turn.

"I cannot understand everything, but what she says she means. Oh, Gaston, what a fool, what a fool you've been!"

After a moment, however, she threw her arms about him with animal-like fierceness.

"But I can't give you up—I can't!" Then, with another of those sudden changes, she added, with a wild little laugh, "I can't, I can't, O Master of the Hounds!"



"And you shall not, dear," he said. "To-morrow, if you will, I shall make you my wife."

She looked up at him, a world of gratitude and affection in her eyes. "God bless you for that," she said, in a whisper. "I will try to be worthy of you."

"God forgive me for the past, Andrée. I'll try to be a good husband to you."

After a little pause he added, "I will send Annette to the curé now, and ask him to come."

"Will you not go to him yourself?" she gently urged.

"Yes, yes, of course. That will be better. And I'll bring him over."

With a tender good-by he left her. When he entered the house again an hour later, the curé was with him, and his face had a look of more serious softness than it had ever worn. As the curé talked with Andrée, he sat in another room and pondered on the past, wondered about the future, saw his present duty clearly, fixedly; and now that he had made up his mind, nothing could turn him from it. At last the curé called him into the other room, and what the good priest said to them both they justified in their minds.

Two mornings afterwards they were married in the little church on the hill,—a bare meagre ceremony, for Gaston was not a Catholic, and Andrée had not a relative to speak or stand for her; but it was enough, or so said the good bishop at Quimper, and the root of the matter was that the world must now hold its peace.

On the evening of the wedding-day Gaston and Andrée were seated in the pavilion, talking as they had never talked before, for a new element had entered into their lives.

There came a knock at the door. Annette entered with a letter. The postman had not delivered it on his rounds, because the address was not correct. It was for madame. Andrée took it, started at the handwriting, tore open the envelope, and read:

"Zoug-Zoug congratulates you on the conquest of his nephew. Zoug-Zoug's name is not George Maur, as you knew him. Allah's blessing, with Zoug-Zoug's!

"What fame you've got now—dompteuse, and the sweet scandal!"

The journalist had found out Zoug-Zoug at last, and Ian Belward had talked with the manager of the menagerie.

Andrée shuddered and put the letter in her pocket. Now she understood why she had shrunk from Gaston that first night and those first days in Audierne: that strange sixth sense, divination,—vague, helpless prescience. And here, suddenly, she shrank again, but with a different thought. She hurriedly left the room and went to her chamber.

In a few moments he came to her. She was sitting upright in a chair, looking straight before her. Her lips were bloodless, her eyes were burning. He came and took her hands.

"What is it, Andrée?" he said. "That letter, dear."

She looked at him steadily.

"You'll be sorry if you read it."

But she gave it to him. He lighted a candle, put it on a little table, sat down, and read. The shock went deep; so deep that it made no violent sign on the surface. He spread the letter out before him. The candle showed his face gone gray and knotted with misery. He could bear all the rest,—fight, do all that was right to the coming mother of his child; but this made him sick and dizzy. He felt as he did when he waked up in Labrador with his wife's dead lips pressed to his neck. It was strange, too, that Andrée was as quiet as he: no storm: misery had gone deep with her also.

"Do you care to tell me about it?" he said.

She sat back in her chair, her hands over her eyes. Presently, still sitting so, she spoke.

Ian Belward had painted them and their van in the hills of Auvergne, and had persuaded her to sit for a picture. He had treated her courteously at first. Her father was taken ill suddenly, and died. She was alone for a few days afterwards. Ian Belward came to her. Of that miserable, heart-rending, cruel time, the life-sorrow of a defenceless girl, Gaston heard with a hard sort of coldness. The promised marriage was a matter for the man's mirth a week later. They came across three young artists from Paris,—Bagshot, Fancourt, and another,—who camped one night beside them. It was then she fully realized the deep shame of her position. The next night she ran away and joined a travelling menagerie. The rest he knew. When she had ended there was silence for a time, broken only by one quick gasping sob from Gaston. The girl sat still as death, her eyes on him intently.

"Poor Andrée! Poor girl!" he said at last.

She sighed—how pitifully!

"What shall we do?" she asked.

He scarcely spoke above a whisper:

"There must be time to think. I will go to London."

"You will come back?"

"Yes,—in five days, if I live."

"I believe you," she said, quietly. "You never lied to me. When you return we will know what to do." Her manner was strangely quiet. "A little trading schooner goes from Douarnenez to England to-morrow morning," she went on. "There is a notice of it in the market-place. That would save the journey to Paris."

"Yes, that will do very well. I will start for Douarnenez at once."

"Will Jacques go too?"

"No."

An hour later he passed Delia and her father on the road to Douarnenez. He did not recognize them, but Delia, seeing him, shrank away in a corner of the carriage, trembling.

Jacques had wished to go to London with Gaston, but had been denied. He was to care for the horses. When he saw his master ride down over the *place*, waving a hand back towards him, he came in and said to Andrée,—

"Madame, there is trouble,—I do not know what. But I once said I would never leave him, wherever he go or whatever he did. Well, I never will leave him—or you, madame—no!"

"That is right, that is right," she said, earnestly; "you must never leave him, Jacques. He is a good man!"

When Jacques had gone she shut herself up in her room. She was gathering all her life into the compass of an hour. She felt but one thing,—the ruin of her happiness and Gaston's.

"He is a good man," she said over and over to herself. And the other—Ian Belward?—All the barbarian in her was alive.

The next morning she started for Paris, saying to Jacques and Annette that she would return in four days.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### "RETURN, O SHULAMITE!"

ALMOST the first person that Gaston recognized in London was Cluny Vosse. He had been to Victoria Station to see a friend off by the train, and as he was leaving, Gaston and he recognized each other. The lad's greeting was a little shy until he saw that Gaston was cool and composed as usual,—in effect, nothing had happened. Cluny was delighted, and opened his mind:

"They'd kicked up a deuce of a row in the papers, and there'd been no end of talk; but he didn't see what all the babble was about, and he'd said so again and again to Lady Dargan."

"And Lady Dargan, Cluny?" asked Gaston, quietly.

Cluny could not be dishonest, though he would try hard not to say painful things.

"Well, she was a bit fierce at first,—she's a woman, you know,—but afterwards she went like a baby; cried, and wouldn't stay abroad any longer: so we're back in town. We're going down to the country, though, to-morrow or next day."

"Do you think I had better call, Cluny?" Gaston ventured suggestively.

"Yes, yes, of course," Cluny replied, with great eagerness, as if to justify the matter to himself.

Gaston smiled, said that he might,—he was only in town for a few days,—and dropped Cluny in Pall Mall.

Cluny came running back.

"I say, Belward, things'll come around just as they were before, won't they? You're going to cut in, and not let 'em walk on you?"

"Yes, I'm 'going to cut in,' Cluny boy."

Cluny brightened.

"And of course it isn't all over with Delia, is it?" He blushed.

Gaston reached out and dropped a hand on Cluny's shoulder.

"I'm afraid it is all over, Cluny."

Cluny spoke without thinking.

"I say, it's rough on her, isn't it?"

Then he was confused, hurriedly offered Gaston a cigarette, a hasty good-by was said, and they parted.

Gaston went first to Lord Faramond. He encountered inquisition, cynical humor, flashes of sympathy, with a general flavor of reproach. The tradition of the Commons! Ah, one way only: he must come back alone—alone—and live it down. Fortunately, it wasn't an intrigue—no matter of divorce: a *dompteuse*, he believed. It must end, of course, and he would see what could be done. Such a chance—such a chance as he had had! Make it up with his grandfather, and reverse the record—reverse the record: that was the only way. This meeting must, of course, be strictly between themselves. But he was really interested for him, for his people, and for the tradition of the Commons.

"I am Master of the Hounds, too," said Gaston, dryly.

Lord Faramond caught the meaning, and smiled grimly.

Then came Gaston's decision: he would come back,—not to live the thing down, but to hold his place as long as he could: to fight.

Lord Faramond shrugged a shoulder.

"Without—her?"

"I cannot say that."

"With her, I can promise nothing,—nothing. You cannot fight it so. No one man is stronger than massed opinion. It is merely a matter of pressure. No, no; I can promise nothing in that case."

The Premier's face had gone cold and disdainful. Why should a clever man like Belward be so infatuated? He rose. Gaston thanked him for the meeting, and was about to go, when the Prime Minister, tapping his shoulder kindly, said,—

"Mr. Belward, you are not playing to the rules of the game." He waved his hand towards the Chamber of the House. "It is the greatest game in the world. She must go! Do not reply. You *will* come back without her. Good-by!"

Then came Ridley Court. He entered on Sir William and Lady Belward without announcement. Sir William came to his feet, austere and pale. Lady Belward's fingers trembled on the lace she held. They looked many years older. Neither spoke his name, nor did they offer their hands. Gaston did not wince: he had expected it. He owed these old people something. They lived according to their lights, they had acted righteously as by their code, they had used him well—well always.

"Will you hear the whole story?" he said.

He felt that it would be best to tell them all.

"Can it do any good?" asked Sir William.

He looked towards his wife.

"Perhaps it is better to hear it," she murmured. She was clinging to a vague hope.

Gaston told the story plainly, briefly, as he had told his earlier history. Its conciseness and simplicity were poignant. From the day he first saw Andrée in the justice's room till the hour when she opened Ian Belward's letter, his tale went. Then he paused.

"I remember very well," Sir William said, with painful medita-

tion: "a strange girl, with a remarkable face. You pleaded for her father then. Ah, yes, an unhappy case!"

"There is more?" asked Lady Belward, leaning on her cane. She seemed very frail.

Then with a terrible brevity Gaston told them of his uncle, of the letter to Andrée: all, except that Andrée was his wife. He had no idea of sparing Ian Belward now. A groan escaped Lady Belward.

"And now—now, what will you do?" asked the baronet.

"I do not know. I am going back first to Andrée."

Sir William's face was ashy.

"Impossible!"

"I promised, and I will go back."

Lady Belward's voice quivered:

"Stay, oh, stay, and redeem the past. You can, oh, you can out-live it."

Always the same: live it down!

"It is no use," he answered: "I must return."

Then in a few words he thanked them for all, and bade them good-by. He did not offer his hand, nor did they. But at the door he heard Lady Belward say, in a pleading voice,—

"Gaston!"

He returned. She held out her hand.

"You must not do as your father did," she said. "Give the woman up, and come back to us. Oh, am I nothing to you—nothing?"

"Is there no other way?" he asked, gravely, sorrowfully.

She did not reply. He turned to his grandfather.

"There is no other way," said the old man, sternly. Then, in a voice almost shrill with pain and indignation, he cried out as he had never done in his life before, "Nothing, nothing, nothing but disgrace! My God in heaven! a lion-tamer!—a gypsy! An honorable name dragged through the mire! Go back," he said, grandly; "go back to the woman, and she to her lions—savages, savages, savages!"

"Savages after the manner of our forefathers," Gaston answered, quietly. "The first Gaston showed us the way. His wife was a strolling player's daughter. Good-by, sir."

Lady Belward's face was in her hands.

"Good-by—grandmother," he said at the door, and then he was gone.

At the outer door the old housekeeper stepped forward, her gloomy face most agitated.

"Oh, sir! oh, sir! you will come back again? Oh, don't go like your father!"

He suddenly threw an arm about her shoulder, and kissed her on the cheek.

"I'll come back—yes, I'll come back here—if I can. Good-by, Hovey."

In the library Sir William and Lady Belward sat silent for a time. Presently Sir William rose, and walked up and down. He paused at last, and said, in a strange, hesitating voice, his hands chafing each other,—

"I forgot myself, my dear. I fear I was violent. I would like to ask his pardon. Ah, yes, yes."

Then he sat down and took her hand, and held it long in the silence.

"It all feels so empty!—so empty!" she said, at last, as the tower clock struck hollow on the air.

The old man could not reply, but he drew her close to him, and Hovey, from the door, saw his tears dropping on her white hair.

Gaston went to Manchester Square. He half dreaded a meeting with Alice, and yet he wished it. He did not find her. She had gone to Paris with her uncle, the servant said. He got their address. There was little left to do but to avoid reporters, two of whom almost forced themselves in upon him. He was to go back to Douarnenez by the little boat that brought him, and at seven o'clock in the morning he watched the mists of England recede.

He chanced to put his hand into a light overcoat which he had got at his chambers before he started. He drew out a paper, the one discovered in the solicitor's office in London. It was an ancient deed of entail of the property, drawn by Sir Gaston Belward, which, through being lost, was never put into force. He was not sure that it had value. If it had, all chance of the estate was gone for him; it would be his uncle's. Well, what did it matter? Yes, it did matter: Andrée! For her? No, not for her! He would play straight. He would take his future as it came: he would not drop this paper into the water.

He smiled bitterly, got an envelope at a public-house on the quay, wrote a few words in pencil on the document, and in a few moments it was on its way to Sir William Belward, who when he received it said,—

"Worthless, quite worthless! But he has an honest mind,—an honest mind!"

Meanwhile, Andrée was in Paris. Leaving her bag at the Gare Montparnasse, she had gone straight to Ian Belward's house. She had lived years in the last few hours. She had had no sleep on the journey, and her mind had been strained unbearably. It had, however, a fixed idea, which shuttled in and out in a hundred shapes, but ever pointing to one end. She had determined on a painful thing,—the only way.

She reached the house, and was admitted. In answer to questions, she had an appointment with monsieur. He was not within. Well, she would wait. She was motioned into the studio. She was outwardly calm. The servant presently recognized her. He had been to the menagerie, and he had seen her with Gaston. His manner changed instantly. Could he do anything? No, nothing. She was left alone. For a long time she sat motionless, then a sudden restlessness seized her. Her brain seemed a burning atmosphere, in which every thought, everything, showed with an unbearable intensity. The terrible clearness of it all—how it made her eyes, her heart ache! Her blood was beating hard against every pore. She felt that she would go



mad if he did not come. Once she took out the stiletto she had concealed in the bosom of her cloak, and looked at it. She had always carried it when among the beasts at the menagerie, but had never yet used it.

Time passed. She felt ill; she became blind with pain. Presently the servant entered with a telegram. His master would not be back until the next morning.

Very well, she would return in the morning. She gave him money. He was not to say that she had called. In the Boulevard Montparnasse she took a cab. To the menagerie, she said to the driver. How strange it all looked: the Invalides, Notre-Dame, the Tuileries Gardens, the Place de la Concorde! The innumerable lights were so near and yet so far: it was a kink of the brain, but she seemed withdrawn from them, not they from her. A woman passed with a baby in her arms. What a pretty, sweet face it had!—the light from a kiosk fell on it as she passed. Why did it not have a pretty, delicate Breton cap? As she went on, that kept beating in her brain: why did not the child wear a dainty Breton cap,—a white Breton cap? The face kept peeping from behind the lights—without the dainty Breton cap!

The menagerie at last. She dismissed the cab, went to a little door at the back of the building, and knocked. She was admitted. The care-taker exclaimed with pleasure. She wished to visit the animals? He would go with her; and he picked up a light. No, she would go alone. How were Hector and Balzac and Antoinette? She took the keys. How cool and pleasant they were to the touch! The steel of the lantern, too—how exquisitely soothing! He must lie down again: she would wake him as she came out. No, no, she would go alone.

She went to cage after cage: at last to that of the largest lions. There was a deep answering purr to her soft call. As she entered, she saw a heap moving in one corner,—a lion lately bought. She spoke, and there was an angry growl. She wheeled to leave the cage, but her cloak caught the door, and it snapped shut.

Too late. A blow brought her to the ground.

She had made no cry, and now she lay so still!

The watchman had fallen asleep again. In the early morning he remembered. The grayish golden dawn was creeping in, when he found her with two lions protecting, keeping guard over her, while another crouched snarling in a corner. There was no mark on her face. The point of the stiletto which she had carried in her cloak had pierced her when she fell.

In a hotel near the Arc de Triomphe Alice Wingfield read the news. It was she who tenderly prepared the body for burial, and who telegraphed to Gaston at Audierne, getting a reply from Jacques that he was not yet back from London. The next day Andrée was found a quiet place in the cemetery at Montmartre.

In the evening Alice and her relative started for Audierne.

On board the *Fleur d'Orange* Gaston struggled with the problem. There was one thought ever coming. He shut it out at this point, and it crept in at that. He remembered when two men, old friends, dis-

covered that one, unknowingly, had been living with the wife of the other. There was one too many: the situation was impossible. The men played a game of cards to see which should die. But they did not reckon with the other factor. It was the woman who died.

Was not his own situation far worse? With his uncle living—but no, no, it was out of the question! Yet Ian Belward had been shameless, a sensualist, who had wrecked the girl's happiness and his. He himself had done a mad thing in the eyes of the world, but it was more mad than wicked. Had this happened in the North with another man, how easily would the problem have been solved!

Go to his uncle and tell him that he must remove himself forever from the situation? Demand it? force it? Impossible: this was Europe.

They arrived at Douarnenez. The diligence had gone. A fishing-boat was starting for Audierne. He decided to go by it. Breton fishermen are usually shy of storm to foolishness, and one or two of the crew urged the drunken skipper not to start, for there were signs of a southwest wind, too friendly to the Bay des Trépassés. The skipper was, however, cheerfully reckless, and growled down objection.

The boat came on with a sweet wind off the land for a time. Suddenly, when in the neighborhood of Point du Raz, the wind drew ahead very squally, with rain in gusts out of the southwest. The skipper put the boat on the starboard tack, close-hauled and close-reefed the sails, keeping as near the wind as possible, with the hope of weathering the rocky point at the western extremity of the Bay des Trépassés. By that time there was a heavy sea running; night came on, and the weather grew very thick. They heard the breakers presently, but they could not make out the Point. Old sailor as he was, and knowing as well as any man the perilous ground, the skipper lost his drunken head this time, and presently lost his way also, in the murk and tumult of the storm.

At eight o'clock she struck. She was thrown on her side, a heavy sea broke over her, and they were all washed off. No one raised a cry. They were busy fighting Death.

Gaston was a strong swimmer. It did not occur to him that perhaps this was the easiest way out of the maze. He had ever been a fighter. The seas tossed him here and there. He saw faces about him for an instant,—shaggy wild Breton faces,—but they dropped away, he knew not where. The current kept driving him inshore. As in a dream, he could hear the breakers,—the pumas on their tread-mill of death. How long would it last? How long before he would be beaten upon that tread-mill, fondled to death by those mad paws? Presently dreams came,—kind, vague, distant dreams. His brain flew like a drunken dove to far points of the world and back again. A moment it rested. Andrée! He had made no provision for her, none at all. He must live, he must fight on for her, the homeless girl, his wife!

He fought on and on. No longer in the water, as it seemed to him. He had travelled very far. He heard the clash of sabres, the distant roar of cannon, the beating of horses' hoofs, the thud-thud, tread-tread, of an army. How reckless and wild it was! He stretched up his arm

to strike—what was it? Something hard that bruised: then his whole body was dashed against the thing. He was back again, awake. With a last effort he drew himself up on a huge rock that stands lonely in the wash of the bay. Then he cried out, "Andrée!" and fell senseless, —safe.

The storm went down. The cold, fast-travelling moon came out, saw the one living thing in that wild bay, and hurried on into the dark again, but came and went so till morning, playing hide-and-seek with the man and his Ararat.

Daylight saw him, wet, haggard, broken, looking out over the waste of shaken water. Upon the shore glared the stone of the vanished City of Ys in the warm sun, and the fierce pumas trod their grumbling way. Sea-gulls flew about the quiet set figure, in whose brooding eyes there were at once despair and salvation.

He was standing between two worlds. He had had his great crisis, and his wounded soul rested for a moment ere he ventured out upon the highways again. He knew not how it was, but there had passed into him the dignity of sorrow and the joy of deliverance at the same time. He saw life's responsibilities clearer, duties swam grandly before him. It was a large dream, in which, for the time, he was not conscious of those troubles which, yesterday, had clinched his hands and knotted his forehead. He had come a step higher in the way of life, and into his spirit had flowed a new and sobered power. His heart was sore, but his mind was lifted up. The fatal wrangle of the pumas there below, the sound of it, would be in his ears forever, but he had come above it; the searching vigor of the sun entered into his bones.

He knew that he was going back to England, to ample work and strong days, but he did not know that he was going alone. He did not know that Andrée was gone,—that she had found her true place: in his undying memory.

So intent was he, that he did not see a boat making into the bay towards him.

*Gilbert Parker.*

THE END.

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### FAIRY-LAND.

**W**ILL I not take you to Fairy-land?

You will promise to be so good,  
Keep to my side, and hold my hand?—

Ah, my dear, if I only could!

Poets and sages have sought it for ages,

Dreamed of it nightly and sung it by day;

But never hath mortal come back from its portal,

Daytime or night-time, to show us the way!

*Sara Matthews Handy.*

## TWO, IN THE "OTHER HALF."

ACCORDING to the generally accepted meaning of the word "good," they could not be described as such. But that was more their misfortune than their fault. Possibly if their fortunes had been better, and their faults worse, they might have been in our half. What could one expect from them? They had been born anywhere, and bred nowhere.

His earliest recollections were of an attic room, occupied by a scarcity of furniture, a man, a woman, and himself. Then came a time when the man and woman went away, and the woman did not return.

After that he was sole possessor of the attic room, except when the man would come back for a day or two, the worse for wear, but passably good-natured. These days were hailed with joy, because they meant a little better fare, a taste of beer or something stronger, perhaps a garment of some kind, no necessity to sell newspapers or to commit petty thefts. Not that thieving was especially obnoxious,—there was an excitement in it,—but "dodgin' de cops," with a bun protruding from one's pocket, had become a work of art, and consequently was difficult.

At last there came a long period when the man, whom he called "Dad," did not return. Also, at this time, the public's thirst for news seemed to be at a low ebb, or else the other boys had been before him with their papers. Besides, he had twice been "took up," and things in general seemed to be going against him. No wood, no coal, nothing could be found, borrowed, or stolen, and he had sold the only chair, for ten cents, to a woman on the floor below, two days since. He was sitting on an apology for a blanket, in the mental state of Mr. Micawber, when the door opened and two men entered. They did a great deal of talking about what the stove would go for, and the table, and a tin can, and a spoon and knife: a little broken china, and some empty whiskey-bottles, were left out of the bargain. "We'll put him in an institootion," said one of the men, jerking his thumb toward the boy.

An "institootion"! To the street Arab, that word is fraught with so many and such divers horrors that it would be hard to convey them to the mind of an intelligent mortal. Take a butterfly of eighteen or nineteen from "our half" out of the maze of balls, dinners, etc., place her behind an iron grating, in a prescribed black gown, with a silent room, and a little bread and water for her companions, and then compare her feelings with those of the "waif" who hears that he is to go into an institution. Their ideas on the two subjects are much the same.

"Yes, that's the place for him," said the second man, shouldering the table.

But apparently the boy did not think so, for, with the alacrity of one of his kind, he was off, out of the door, and, sliding down the rickety balusters, disappeared into the darkness below.

As it really made no difference to the men what became of him, he was not followed. At this time he was somewhere between the ages of ten and thirteen. And so, sleeping anywhere in the open air in summer, and in an overcrowded, badly-ventilated lodging-house, for a few pennies, in winter, and selling papers, blackening boots, doing whatever came to his hand, to eke out existence, he grew to man's estate.

Having known nothing better, he was not unhappy in it.

Her first recollections were of a room in which were several straw mattresses, and where other furniture was conspicuous by its absence. In this room, at night, she and an old woman, whom she called "Granny," slept on one of the mattresses together. The others were "let out" to transient women lodgers. In the daytime she ran about the streets, or went into the saloons for a few cents' worth of beer for the old woman, or gathered bits of fuel to burn.

As she grew older, any small amount of cooking that was done, she did; any patching that was done, she did; and when she had acquired a slight knowledge of dollars and cents, she sometimes arranged with the lodgers and took their money. She was well known in the alley where she lived as a shrewd little girl, who knew how to make a bargain, and the men in the five beer-saloons of her immediate neighborhood had to be particular in the filling of the cans which she carried to and from the lodging-house.

Ill fed, ill clothed, and ill treated, she still preferred the corner of a mattress, such food as could never be called a meal, and repeated buffetings, to the risking of the unknown out there in the big streets beyond. Once or twice she had contemplated running away; but another little girl who lived in the alley had done so, and had come back altogether worse than before, and an extra flogging had been her only reception.

Considering all things, it seemed safer to stay where she was.

So time went on, and she grew tall, with a certain grace of her own, and with a pair of great, hungry brown eyes. In a vague way it would dawn upon her poor, starved mind that there was something other than this, but she knew not where or how to find it. And then a rough blow from the wrinkled hand of the old hag would bring her back to the realization that bread was needed.

The pretty devices and the sweetness of girlhood in "our half" were unknown to her, and the word "mother" had no meaning for her ears.

She must have been eighteen, or thereabouts, when the beginning of a great change came into her life.

For some time past she had had entire charge of the lodging-house, giving to the owner each day the small amounts obtained from the business.

One night, through some unaccountable reason, she had allowed a lodger to sleep on a mattress without paying her fee. The delinquent had gone but a short time when she realized this fact, and in an instant had followed her, fear of the old woman's wrath, and intense anger

against the one who had deceived her, filling her mind. She ran with all her speed down the alley, and, turning the corner, came with full force against a man.

"Hullo! An' where are yer bound?" he said, stopping the way.

"Lemme go; she owes me; she's got my money," gasped the girl.

"Who, my fine mad un?" he said.

"Her," she replied, pointing to a woman who seemed to be finding an enthralling occupation in the contents of an ash-barrel. "Move on, or I'll hit yer."

The man was young, not more than two or three years her senior, but big and strong.

"I'll git cher money for yer," he said.

"Oh, yer will, will yer?" she replied, in a tone meant to be the height of sarcasm, and, darting past him, reached the woman, and began operations.

The man stood by the two, and for a moment watched the girl's endeavors to procure her lawful rights, then pushed her aside, and, taking the other by her shoulders, shook her violently, until she had promised to give him all her possessions, including her soul; the latter, however, he declined, saying, in the polite language of his class, that it might go somewhere else, and that he wished it bad luck forever. Then the woman slowly counted a few cents, and gave them to him, he counting them after her, with one hand grasping her arm. "How much?" he said, turning to the girl. She told him, and, with a final shake, he got the last cent, and let the woman go.

"Here," he said, "take it."

The girl looked at him in surprise, as her hand closed over the money. "Honest, are yer giving it up?" she said.

"I ain't so mean as that," he replied.

In her vocabulary there was no word of thanks,—she had not hitherto had occasion to use one,—but she raised her great hungry brown eyes to his, full of gratitude, and he seemed to understand. "Tain't nothin'," he said, turning away, while the girl, with the money clasped tightly in her hand, went slowly back to the lodging-house.

And so these two had met.

A month elapsed, and he had not thought of her, as he was much engaged with other matters. He had sold his boot-black stand, with all the accompanying paraphernalia, and had been hired at a beer-factory to roll barrels to and from the wagons.

One evening, after his work was over, he was sitting on the only remaining step of a torn-down building, eating something that distantly resembled pastry. There were several women and children gathering bits of wood which were lying about the street in front of the dilapidated house. One of them came toward the step, and, without noticing him, began to tie a heavy bundle of sticks together, that she might the more conveniently carry them over her shoulder. He recognized her at once, and, breaking off a piece of the pie, said, "Hullo! hungry? Here." She took the proffered gift, and replied, "Hullo! ain't yer good!"



They sat a few moments in silence; then she finished tying her bundle, and started to lift it to her shoulder. "Gimme it," he said, and, taking the old strip of calico that did duty as a rope, flung it over his arm.

On the way to the lodging-house he told her he liked her and her eyes, and that he would give her something to eat the next evening, if she would come and gather sticks again, and he asked her if she had any other "fellers."

She told him where she lived, and how hungry she was always, and how cruel the old hag was, and that she had no "fellers," and that she would come next evening, which she did. When he gave her a bun and an orange, and she sat on the step and ate them, and told him that no one had ever been kind to her before, he had a very strange sensation of something thumping in the region of his heart, which, were this a story of two in our half, would be described in flowery language as love.

After this they met regularly every evening for a month or so, and sat on the door-step while she partook of something which to her was a rare delicacy.

At the end of this time she came to him one evening with a great scar across her forehead, and a paler face than usual. She told him a pitiable tale of ill treatment at the hands of the old woman, and he asked her if she wanted to go back to the lodging-house. She said she had come away forever, and that if she had to beg for the rest of her life she would do it rather than return to the place.

He had not a high opinion of women, but this one was different from the others whom he had known, and there was that uncomfortable thing thumping at his heart again, and she was crying. He moved a little nearer, and, in an uncouth way, put his arm about her, and as, with a convulsive sob, she let her head fall on his shoulder, he kissed her.

The rising sun, dimmed by the mists and sins of the great city, had come to run its course another day, when these two awakened. They had made some crude plans, and had then gone to sleep on the door-step, she wrapped in his ragged coat.

They got some bread, and a strange liquid that was called tea, at a place of which he knew. Then they returned to the torn-down building and inspected the basement. According to their ideas, it was quite habitable, and the workmen had left the house several days before.

In the evening, when he came back from his work, some of the dirt and mortar had been cleared away, and with a little money he had given her she had bought food and had it ready for them both. Afterward they went out and procured a few necessities, and then he sat on a piece of wood and watched her move about the room.

He was quite contented, and knew that he cared very much about this girl; he felt a little foolish also, as he remembered that he had been thinking of her all day. "Ain't yer handy?" he said, looking at her.

"No, I ain't," she replied, but it was said in a spirit of meekness, not of contradiction.

It was all new and strange, and she was a little dazed, but quite happy, since happiness is relative and does not depend on one's surroundings.

So they made this their home, and he found that by paying a small amount to the owner of the building they might remain there as long as they chose.

The owner wondered how mortals could care to live when they were reduced to a cellar for a habitation.

The "benefit of clergy" to cement their tie was not at all necessary to their minds, but they were faithful to each other.

Each morning, when he went to his work, he carried a tin pail, filled by her with his mid-day meal, and in the evening when he returned she had some frugal repast prepared for them both. Sometimes, when the heat was great, they would take their food and go out and eat it in the park, facing the water.

Afterwards, perhaps he would smoke some bad tobacco, and she would sit by him, while the night breeze came up to them from the Narrows below the city.

Once or twice on Sunday afternoons, his holiday, she would don a white hat, her only piece of finery, with a bit of white ribbon around it, and a bunch of flowers on the side, of a color and shape unknown to nature. He had seen the white hat in a shop-window, and had gone in and bought it, thereby finding it necessary to deny himself many drinks and much tobacco for some time to come.

He would shake the week's dust from his clothes and wash his hands, and then they would go forth and buy two tickets, wherewith they might take the ferry across the river. Standing outside by the railing, they would find an interest in every craft afloat, and in the great piece of mechanism hung between the two cities and black with humanity.

Then they would take the returning boat, and wish they had more money, in order to repeat their trip at once.

When the winter came, and the cold was severe, life was more difficult, but they managed to keep comparatively warm. In the old stove that he had bought they burned a small amount of wood, and a very little coal, some of which they collected. A piece of material that could never have been a blanket was purchased, and did duty as such.

Their hardships were many and their pleasures few, from our standpoint; but to hardships they were accustomed, and to pleasures they were not.

Once he had some extra money, and he said they would go to the "show." They had stood in front of this building, feasting their eyes upon the play-bills, whereon were figured long-haired women and short-legged men, amid other specimens of equal delight. To receive admittance to all these joys, and to wander among them at will, was something which they had long desired. Now for the price of ten cents each their wish became an accomplished fact, from which conversation was derived for the rest of the winter.

When the warm days came again, he was still rolling barrels at the

factory, and she was still ministering to their daily wants, and they were both still happy, as happiness goes.

Only twice in the course of a whole year did she go to the nearest saloon and help him home; and for the rest, his treatment of her and hers of him came of love, although it was of a fierce and untamed kind.

More than twelve months passed, and one night the bells struck two and he had not come home. She got a ragged piece of cloth, which was her wrap, put it on, and went out and looked through the nearest drinking-places, but he was not there.

Then she came back, thinking he might have returned while she was gone. As she reached the steps leading into the basement, the place looked to her strained, tired eyes as if it were one glowing light. She staggered as she entered the room. Three men were busy over something on the floor. In an instant she had pushed them aside, and was on her knees by the one being who had given her joy.

"Yer've kilt him! yer've kilt him!" she said, rushing at them in a blind fury, and beating wildly with her hands.

"What's he to you?" said one of the men.

"He's mine, he's mine; and yer've kilt him!"

Then another tried to quiet her, and told her that an Italian had stabbed him in a saloon, mistaking him for some one else, and that they could not bring him home before, because he could not tell them where he lived. At last they had been able to understand him, and—yes, they thought he must be dying.

She went back and stood by him, and he opened his eyes and looked at her. She saw that he tried to speak, so she knelt again, with her hands clasped convulsively before her.

"I'm goin'," he said. "What'll yer do? I ain't never treated yer rough, have I?"

"No, no," she moaned.

"Yer—real—good; gimme er—kiss."

She took him in her arms, and, with unnatural strength, raised him, covering his face with frantic kisses. He closed his eyes, and her arms fell limply as he dropped back on the floor, for she knew that he was dead.

Her tall, slight form swayed unsteadily, and then fell prostrate across his lifeless body.

When consciousness of her surroundings returned to her, she discovered a woman seated by her side. Slowly her eyes swept the room, and, not finding what they sought, turned, with a fierce look in them, toward her companion. "What yer done wid him?" she said, raising herself with difficulty. Then the woman poured forth a detailed account, telling her that she had had a fever and had been delirious, and that they had taken the dead man away the day before, and that one of the men had brought her to the girl to stay with her until she was better. Now she would go home, and come again by and by.

The girl sank back, and the woman went out and left her. Scarcely

had the door closed before she was up and groping her way toward it, with the old shawl thrown over her head. "They've took him, but I'll find him," she said; and, although the evening air of the late fall weather chilled her, she heeded it not, and, summoning all her strength, started on her lonely quest.

All night she walked the streets, the returning fever in her brain giving her power. By morning her reason had gone, but still she walked on mechanically.

The early pedestrians whom she met glanced curiously at her, but passed by. As the day advanced, a drizzling rain came down, drenching her clothing and chilling her. Exhausted, she sank upon a door-step; all sense of time and place had left her, and, with her head against the wall, the hours came and went. At intervals she repeated, "I'll find him, I'll find him," and then attempted to struggle to her feet, but fell back, weak and shivering.

At last, with a great effort, she staggered forward, and pursued her way a little farther.

The streets were full of hurrying crowds, returning to their homes after the labors of the day, and there was no time to notice her, as she dragged her weary feet along, nearing her journey's end. Quite suddenly she found herself before an open iron gate-way, the entrance to a door beyond. She saw there was no crowd within, and she was losing sight, and was bewildered. With her flickering strength she entered the church, and the sound of music came to her ears. In some vague way she fancied he was here, and, staggering forward, reached a seat. Then, with a low moan, her head fell forward on her breast, while the voices of the choir-boys dropped softly, and rose and soared away like the flight of an unbound soul.

When the practising was over, a sweet-faced sister came down the aisle, and stopped to give comfort to the mournful-looking woman in the seat. Then she saw the truth, and, before she went to get the sexton, laid the girl gently down, and closed the great brown eyes.

There was no band of gold upon her hand, nor any mark to show identity: so, with her eyes full of tears and her heart of sorrow for the misery of the world, the sweet-faced sister knelt in the mighty, all-leveilling presence of death.

*E. Ogden Hays.*

### ON READING WALT WHITMAN.

NOT here we find Apollo's sculptured grace,  
Nor our ideal of the art divine:

An older truth,—a still more distant race,—

They of art's sunrise at the world's confine.

In this great court no polished marble stands,

But Memnon looms and stares across the sands.

*Ulysses Francis Duff.*

## HOT WORK ON THE PAMPAS.

## A SOUTH AMERICAN EPISODE.

IT was in 1873, immediately after the war between the Argentine Republic, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Bolivia, which for three years had been waged with a bitterness without parallel in the sanguinary wars of South America, that I arrived in the Argentine with four companions from the States.

Although active hostilities had ceased, and the regular armies had retired within their respective frontiers, the embitterment between the countries was such that the articles of peace signed in Buenos Ayres were totally ignored by hundreds of small and large bands of guerrillas, who roamed over the vast plains, leaving death and desolation in their wake, while grim fear and terror stalked ahead.

The lonely *estancias*, as well as the many small settlements along the irregular route which these bands of marauders followed, were all called to pay a sanguinary tribute to the lawless hordes. Voluntary surrender was met by wanton destruction; and where a show of resistance was made, untold and harrowing cruelties were added to death, rapine, and the firebrand.

Many of the victims were English, American, Irish, and Scotch settlers, of whom whole families were butchered in cold blood. One of the leading American firms in the city, which had several million dollars invested in one of the largest *estancias* in the country, at Laguna del Rey, was about to send an armed company of a hundred American and English cowboys to their ranch to protect it and the colonists in the neighborhood from further outrage, as well as more effectually to man the fort, which was built during the early stages of the war for the defence of the inhabitants.

The cutthroats had made no less than five determined attacks on the fort since the close of the war, and their depredations kept the little colony in a continual state of alarm.

The firm, which I will call Brown & Co., was glad to accept our offer to join the troop, and the promised adventures were exactly to our taste. The savage in man is never so thoroughly aroused as when the chance is held out to him to hunt down a human being, and there is an added zest to the chase when the human game has, in defiance of all laws, committed murder.

Our company of cavalry was commanded by Howard Maxwell, who, as an officer of the Seventh Regiment of New York, had received a thorough military training.

We left the city at break of a clear November day, mounted on native mustangs. Every man had a led horse tethered to his saddle, for we had a distance of more than five hundred miles to ride, and we determined to cover it in the quickest possible time.

On account of the long experience which we five chums had had in warfare of all kinds with the savage tribes of the United States, as

well as those of the interior of Brazil, the command of the troop was intrusted by Brown & Co. to us. Maxwell appointed Imbrie as his lieutenant, while Franklin, Seward, and I held ourselves ready to step in for any service which might be asked of us in thoroughly handling the command.

The troop was armed with the latest-pattern Winchester rifles and Colt revolvers, while every cartridge-belt and every spare pocket was filled with ammunition. Our departure from the city was witnessed by the military commandant and his staff, who furnished us with full authority from the government to suppress, in any way we saw fit, any of the roving bands of cutthroats we might encounter. The truth of the matter was that the government was as anxious to have these bands of desperadoes wiped out as was the private capitalist who had his wealth invested on the pampas.

When our company of fighters, most of whom hailed from the States, rode out of the city, I am certain that the looks of admiration which we excited stamped us as physically the finest troop that had ever appeared in the streets of the old Spanish town. Once on the outskirts, we took up the trail of the trans-continental railroad, which was then being surveyed, and, putting our horses to a sharp canter, our cowboy yells were the farewell we bade to civilization and luxury for many a month.

The first three days of our trip were uneventful, and, while we pushed our horses for all there was in them, we found enough time to form our command into something like military order. This was the less difficult as most of our men had seen actual service during the war of the rebellion.

On every hand was desolation. Wantonness was plainly written along the track of the cutthroats, and we saw hundreds, yes, thousands of cattle in all stages of agonizing death from cruel mutilations. We judged, from the wide trail that the devastating horde left, that we were following in the wake of a powerful band, whose course evidently led toward our own objective point.

About three o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at a ranch whose buildings were still aflame. In the centre of the court-yard lay a number of dead cattle in the form of an irregular breast-work, and there we heard a whimpering which sounded like that of a young child.

As Maxwell rode forward to investigate the mystery, we crowded after him, and saw before us, lying behind the fallen cattle, three white men and a woman, dead and stark, and, like many whom we had seen before, mutilated in the most revolting manner. We were looking on with eyes suffused with a mistiness which none of us tried to hide, when there crawled from a hole on the under side of one of the dead cattle a young bull-terrier dog, who no sooner saw white men about him than, again uttering the almost human cry which attracted us in the first place to the spot, he bounded off towards a small peach-orchard some three or four hundred yards from the smouldering house, where we could hear him whining and barking furiously.

Irrespective of rank, we pushed forward, and on arriving at the



orchard we saw the dog scratching and tearing at the ground. On drawing nearer we discovered the fearfully mutilated bodies of twenty-three half-breed cutthroats, blackened and scorched as if by a fearful explosion.

We could not understand the mystery until one of our men suddenly disappeared half-way into the ground. On pulling him out of the hole into which he had fallen, we saw an arched underground chamber, one-half of which had completely caved in, while the side over which we were standing was in a dangerous condition.

Cracked and seared walls, blackened with powder, explained the death of the guerillas, and we were destined to learn within a very short time the history of the tragedy. Again the bugler sounded "Boots and Saddles," and every man took to his horse with an eagerness which meant business in the strictest sense of the word.

The dog was carried in front of one of the troopers, and, after having lost almost an hour at Moncrieff's ranch, as it was called, we were soon in full gallop again for our destination. We had ridden about ten miles in absolute silence, except for an occasional command to ride up closer, when we heard at a distance the smart firing of an engagement, and as we drew nearer we saw that a sharp conflict was raging behind a small thicket of peach woods.

Dividing our troop hurriedly, Maxwell took charge of one division, with myself as lieutenant, while the other was commanded by Imbrie, with Franklin and Seward as his aides. Arriving from both sides of the woods at almost the same time, we saw a small band of white men, over whom waved "Old Glory," defending themselves with desperation from a band of more than two hundred cutthroats.

The noise of the conflict deadened the hoof-beats of our advance, and both parties in the fight were equally astonished to see our troop sweeping down upon them from opposite sides of the wood. Taking the cutthroats in front and in rear, it did not require the sound of the bugler's "Charge" to send us down on the enemy with all the pent-up fury which we had been nursing during our trip "up."

At them we went with the wildest "rebel yells," when the copper-colored half-breed band of devils broke and fled over the pampas as fast as their horses could carry them out of the deadly range of our sharpshooters.

One hundred and thirteen dead we counted on the field, while on our side we lost but one man, and he was the victim of dastardly treachery. Seeing one of the enemy lying in the last throes of death, Truesdel dismounted to give him a drink of water, and as he stooped over to minister to the dying thief the villain raised himself with his remaining strength and as quick as a flash drew his sharp bowie across the throat of our Samaritan comrade. In less than a minute both were dead.

We did not care to lose the time necessary to bury the bodies; so, taking with us the wounded men, as well as the fifteen surviving settlers, we hurried on as fast as we could, mounting those who were able to take the saddle, and improvising supports for those who had to be carried.

From the survivors of the settlers whom we rescued from certain death we heard the story of the explosion in the vault on Moncrieff's ranch. Moncrieff always feared war or treachery from the natives on his lonely ranch, and took the precaution in time of peace to build an underground passage-way from his house to the vault, as a place of refuge for his family in time of danger.

A cautious Yankee, he always kept a large supply of powder, cartridges, and arms in the vault, as the distance to the nearest "station" was almost a hundred miles. In some manner the existence of the vault and its supply of powder and ammunition became known. When the guerillas arrived at the estancia on the day of the butchery the rancher hurried his wife and two daughters into the vault, while he and the three men whom we found lying dead beside the cattle defended the home.

Moncrieff succeeded in fighting his way back to the house again, with the intention of going to the vault and protecting his daughter. It was while a large number of the cutthroats had been led by the fates to hold their council of war immediately over the roof of the vault in which the young girl was confined, who must have heard the discussion going on as to the probable location of the vault and her hiding-place, that a dull roar was followed by a sheet of flame, and a mass of all kinds of débris and dismembered bodies shot into the air, and when the smoke died away the agonized father found himself widowed and childless, through the devotion of his wife and daughters.

The names of Adeline, Marguerite, and Mrs. Moncrieff will always live in the annals of the pampas of the Argentine. The chronicle of their heroism is worthy of an abler pen than mine, but what my tribute lacks in elegance it makes up in a soldier's deep veneration.

The vault was cleared out a few weeks later by Moncrieff and his *gauchos*, and amidst heart-breaking ceremonies the unrecognizable bodies of the martyred daughters and mother were tenderly laid in honored graves. Many of the details we heard from the bereaved father and husband himself at a later date. As a story of woman's heroism it deserves to be saved from oblivion.

On we pushed, without stopping any longer than to place the wounded in our centre, and as the evening darkened about us we could hear in the far distance the noise of a brisk firing, varied every now and then by the ominous boom of cannon.

This latter music came from the fort, as the guerillas were not provided with such implements of war. When we were less than five miles from the fort, Maxwell ordered every man to hold himself in readiness for a "company fire," as a signal to the besieged that help was near. Silently and as rapidly as possible we pushed forward, when suddenly came the command, "Attention, company! Make ready! Fire!" and the crash of a hundred and twenty Winchesters broke on the stillness of the night.

The colony at Del Rey evidently understood the signal, for before long there flashed against the dark sky three rockets, one each of our national colors. The sight of the flaring red, white, and blue spurred every one on with a new hope for the safety of the fort and its garri-

son. Immediately following the signal there came a succession of large red rockets, at least twenty in number, which plainly were a warning to us to advance cautiously.

After a hasty consultation among the officers, Maxwell ordered the troop to spread over the prairie in skirmish line, to dismount at the first sharp blast from the bugler, and to adopt the North American Indian method of warfare of fighting *ventre à terre*, while crawling on hands and knees.

Every man was cautioned to keep his horse secured with a shortened lasso. The signal to dismount came before long in a sharp, short blast, and in the twinkling of an eye all that could be seen of our command was a lot of straggling, riderless horses.

Straight ahead we could see the enemy in groups here and there on the plains in front of the fort, which was now as plainly in sight as it could be on a dark night. "Make ready!" came the command, followed by "Fire!" and before the startled cutthroats had decided on their plan of action fully one hundred of them bit the dust as the sharp crack of our rifles sent the leaden messengers of death upward from the long pampas grass.

Our friends in the fort lit bonfires on the parapets, and this foresight not only illumined the fort and its entire surroundings, but deepened the gloom in which we were hidden. For more than an hour we picked off the guerillas as fast as we could single out victims, for most of us had been trained for sharpshooting in the years from 1861 to 1865. Our troop was chosen by Brown & Co. for fighting purposes, and every man was a crack shot. The slaughter made by our fire was simply awful. One by one the dismayed bandits fled, until the flight ended in a mad scamper to escape from the deadly aim of our guns.

"Mount!" came the order, followed by "Charge!" and with a yell we dashed after the escaping cutthroats. The *estancieros* rushed out from the fort, and as many as had horses followed us in pursuit of the routed scoundrels. The battle of Del Rey was short and sharp. The last lesson of the war was written with Yankee lead on the yellow, greasy parchment skin of the half-breed desperadoes, and the seal was attested by the several hundred Anglo-Saxons who bore witness to the deed.

Morgan S. Edmunds.

### ADMITTANCE.

I MIGHT not, coming to the realms of bliss,  
Of her white presence be at once aware;  
But on my lips the light of her last kiss  
Would win me welcome there.

Charles G. D. Roberts.

## MY FIRST LITERARY ACQUAINTANCES.

IF there is any art, any craft, that more than all others is received the world over as if it were a manifestation of the creative energies of nature instead of a fruition of the human mind, it is the craft, the art, that is embodied in books, which, welcomed as wonders when the invention of printing was new, are now so common that they are everywhere accepted as matters of course. That they exist in printed pages is all that most of us know, but not all that there is to know, for before they could have existed in print they must have existed in manuscript, and before they could have existed in manuscript they must have existed in something else. But in what? If we ask the writers whence their books originated, one asserts that his book is the production of the thing which he calls his mind, while another declares that his book is the emanation of the essence which he supposes to be his soul. They are ready enough to answer, particularly when they write prefaces wherein they anticipate most possible questions. But their answers are too contradictory to be satisfactory. They seem to tell us much, but they really tell us nothing.

A reader from boyhood, it was years before it occurred to me that a book was other than a book. Not that all books were alike,—far from it; but that a book was a book, whatever was its subject, and whoever was its author. That there are books which are not books, except in their outward form, and that there are “books which are books,” as Lamb puts it, was a late discovery of mine, and one which I might never have made if I had not tried to write books myself. I cannot remember the time when I did not read, nor (hardly) when I did not write. If I had been asked why I wrote, I could only have said it was because I wanted to. I had no education, or only such rudiments of education as were taught in the common schools of fifty years ago, and the material conditions which surrounded me were not of a kind that was stimulating, they were so barren and so depressing. I was not emulous of my school-fellows, who were more clever than I, and I was not confident of myself, for I concealed my scribblings. I read everything that came in my way, and, strange to say, nothing seemed to come in my way but verse. The first poet whom I read was Burns, and, despite my ignorance of his dialect, he exercised a singular fascination over me, a fascination that made me try my hand at a Scotch song. How did it run?—

Oh, say, hae ye seen my Mary?  
She's a bonnie lass, wi' a saft blue ee,  
And she trips as lichtlie owre the lea  
As ony, ony fairy.

From Burns I passed to Thomson, to Cowper, to Beattie, to Falconer, and, last of all, to Shakespeare, or so much of Shakespeare as was included in an odd volume which contained two of his Roman plays

and "Troilus and Cressida," and which I found hard reading. By and by I escaped from the eighteenth-century poets, and made the acquaintance of Mrs. Hemans, Miss Landon, and Miss Eliza Cook. At a later period I was in touch with contemporary verse, and, indeed, with contemporary literature generally, and this was through the *New World*, a popular journal, edited by Mr. Park Benjamin and Mr. Epes Sargent. The *New World*, as I remember it, was an excellent weekly of the eclectic sort, depending for its success upon its reproduction of the leading English writers of the day. It reprinted from early sheets the novels of James, Lever, Bulwer, and Dickens, and, on one occasion, a new volume of poems by Mrs. Norton. Another journal which was a liberal education to me was the *Mirror*, edited by Mr. N. P. Willis and Mr. George P. Morris, who issued, at intervals, a *Mirror Library*,—if that is what it was called,—the specialty of which was its reprints of favorite writers; one was devoted to the "English Songs" of Barry Cornwall, and another to "The Eve of St. Agnes" of Keats. I enjoyed my reading, without regard to my like or dislike of the poet upon whom it was bestowed, but it taught me nothing, for after my abortive song I never tried to write like anybody else. I was not clever enough to imitate, nor intelligent enough to originate, but all the same I continued to write. That what I wrote was worthless I must have divined, for I showed it to no one, and never dreamed of seeing it in print. My boyhood was a dark one, for it was crushed by the necessity of my earning something, however little; but it was happier than I knew, for, dark as it was, it was brightened by my passion for reading and writing.

I have forgotten what I tried to write about, nor does it matter, for, whatever it was, it was nothing of which I possessed any knowledge. I had no experience upon which I could draw, and if I had aspirations I was not aware of them. When I was seventeen or thereabouts, I heard of a drug-clerk in the neighborhood whom I was told I ought to know. He was of my own age, or nearly so, and was troubled with the same complaint of scribbling verse. He flew at higher game than I did, however, and with a bolder wing. For, while I fluttered about my poor mundane trifles, he soared aloft in the heaven of solemn song. One of his themes, I remember, was "A Dialogue between Christian and Experience," and another was "A Soliloquy on Golgotha."

He read these pieces to me as he wrote them, and, if I did not greatly admire them, as I fear I did not, for I could never endure religious verse, he certainly did, for he read them over and over again. He believed in himself more than in me, for I soon noticed that he never asked me to read my pieces; and I was glad he did not, since they were not of a kind that he could care for. His mind was more active than mine, and in more directions, for, while he was never weary of wooing the Muse of Zion, he always found time

To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,  
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair.

He was more voluminous than I could be, and more ambitious than I dared be, for the moment he scrawled through his effusions he copied

them and sent them to the Sunday papers. It delighted him to see his name in print there—I could not understand why, since he professed the greatest contempt for editors, who never knew good verse from bad; but so it was, and I wondered at him. If I had known that he was dying of consumption, I might have understood his incessant restlessness of mind and his diseased desire for distinction; but I did not until it was too late. He died, and made no sign. I felt his loss for a time, not so much on his account, I fear, as on my own, for in losing him I lost my only friend. I had no one to visit then, no one to talk with; I had nothing but my books, which I knew by heart, and pens, ink, and paper, which I abused. Why I wrote, night after night, in my lonesome bedroom, by the light of an oil lamp, I never knew. It was not because I thought that what I wrote was worth anybody's reading, for if I had thought so I might have shown it to somebody, and I never did. I copied my verses in little books, and though the verses increased in number the books did not, for before I filled the second I destroyed the first, and before I filled the third I destroyed the second. I might, perhaps, have stopped production, but I could not possibly have stopped destruction.

After many holocausts, I wrote a small piece, which, on reading it over carefully, I concluded to spare, since it seemed to me better than anything I had yet written. It might not be good,—though I hoped it was,—but, as I saw worse things in print every day, I resolved to have it printed—if I could. It was an apostrophe to several ideal qualities, Wealth, Power, Ambition, Truth, which, for their shortcomings, I sentenced to extinction, excepting the last, which I reprieved in the last stanza, telling Death that Truth would be the death of him. I finished this clumsy fantasy as well as I could, gave it a Latin title, "Non Omnis Moriar," made a clean copy of it, and sent it to a little periodical, a weekly, I think, which I had somewhere stumbled across. It was called *The Rover*, and was edited by Seba Smith, whose name I remembered from having seen it in one of my school-books attached to a copy of verses, "The Mother Perishing in a Snow-Storm." A week passed, two weeks passed, and, as the poem did not appear, I lost a half-day in order to learn its fate. I found the office of *The Rover*, which was in, or near, what is now called "Newspaper Row," in Nassau Street, or Fulton Street, and I found Mr. Smith in the editorial room, which was on the second floor, and was a part of the composing-room, as was the custom then. He was what I considered an elderly man,—somewhat over fifty, I imagine,—was tall, or seemed so as he sat at his desk writing, had a pleasant face, a kind, bright eye, and a sweet, gentle voice. I mentioned my name, and said I had sent a poem to him to see if he would print it. I had made a bet that he wouldn't, and if I had won the bet, as I expected, I was going to claim it. He smiled, rather incredulously, I thought, as if he doubted the bet (which was a genuine one), and said that if I had wanted to win I should have wagered the other way. The poem not only would be printed, but *was* printed. And, opening his desk, he handed me a copy of *The Rover*. I was surprised, and told him so. Then I thanked him, and, hurrying from the room and down the stairs,



stopped when I reached the sidewalk to see how I looked in print. Many years have passed since that day,—nigh half a century, I fancy,—but I have never forgotten it, nor Mr. Seba Smith, who was the first editor, the first poet, the first man of letters, whom I was fortunate enough to meet.

The kindness with which Mr. Smith received me removed any apprehensions that I might have had respecting the treatment I was likely to receive from men of established reputation, and served to strengthen my confidence in my own talents. I still shrank from my elders, but I no longer dreaded them, and to convince myself that I did not I sought acquaintance with another writer who was well spoken of in two or three critical journals. His name was Ralph Hoyt: he was an Episcopal clergyman, the pastor of the Church of the Good Shepherd, and the author of a volume of supposititious poetry. Why I sought his acquaintance instead of continuing and cultivating my acquaintance with Mr. Smith I know not, but probably because I felt the need of something which I did not obtain from books, and which I fancied could be obtained only from contact with more mature minds. My remembrance of my first visit to Mr. Hoyt is vague. He received me in what I took to be his lodgings, on the second floor of an old house on the east side of the town, listened with a meditative air to what I had to say, and replied in a measured precise way, weighing his words as if he were in the pulpit. When the interview—which was not a long one—was over, he invited me to visit him whenever I had time, and to bring what I wrote with me. If I had been asked how I felt when I parted from him, I could not have told. That he had been very courteous to me was certain. But mingled with this courtesy was, or I fancied there was, a kind of condescension, which puzzled me. I tried to analyze his manner on my way home, but, as analysis was not habitual with me, I soon abandoned it. "He is a minister," I thought, "and all ministers talk as he did. It is the badge of his profession, the nap of his cloth, and I may have rubbed it the wrong way."

At the end of several months I paid a second visit to Mr. Hoyt, who had removed from lodgings and was living in a smaller house, of which he and his family appeared to be the only occupants. Like the neighborhood in which it stood, it was poor, a shabby little brick dwelling, two stories high, with a rickety wooden stoop, and an ash-barrel on the edge of the curbstone. I lifted the rusty iron knocker, which fell with a dull thud, and was finally admitted into the dingy hall-way by a frowzy Irish girl, who showed me into what she called "the dochtor's stody." It was scantily furnished with three or four black haircloth chairs, a faded and worn ingrain carpet, and a large mahogany table between the two front windows. At the table sat the poet, clothed in his clerical suit (he had been officiating at a funeral, he informed me), but looking somewhat less grave than on my first visit. He asked me what I had been doing since he saw me last, and I told him that I had been working at my trade. The literalness of my answer seemed to surprise him. "I did not mean that," he replied: "I meant what have you been reading and writing." I told him that I

had lately read Leigh Hunt and John Keats, and liked them very much. He stared at me blankly, as if he had never heard their names before, whereat I wondered, though I should not have done so, for I soon discovered that his reading was less than mine. He was not a reader, and when I showed him my latest piece I discovered that he was not a critic. He perused it slowly, pausing at every second or third line, in a search for flaws, after which, with knitted brows, he resumed his snail-like perusal. When he finished the manuscript he handed it back to me with a judicial air and a few perfunctory words that meant nothing. If I had been a little older and a little bolder I would probably have questioned the justice of his judgment, but what would have been the use? He did not like my verse,—that was evident; and I might have known he would not like it, for if his verse was good mine was bad, and if mine was good his was bad indeed. He hurt me, and he humiliated me. That he hurt me was, no doubt, my fault, for I had no right to be sensitive; but that he humiliated me was certainly his fault, for he had no right to be patronizing. But perhaps I expected too much from him,—expected praise, which I did not deserve, and sympathy, which he could not bestow. He was a poor clergyman, with a parish to look after, and a family to provide for. I can put myself in his place now as I could not then, and divining what his life was, how busy, how devoted, how anxious, and how narrow, I can see that I was not, and could not be, much to him. That he was friendly I knew; that he liked me I believed; and that he saw promise in my verse I was told by others, to whom he spoke well of it. It was through him that I became acquainted with my third friend, who expressed to him a wish to meet me. This was Mr. Park Benjamin.

Mr. Benjamin was a very different man from Mr. Hoyt, certain where he was hesitant, outspoken where he was reticent, good-natured but quick-tempered, hasty but generous, dogmatic, impulsive, aggressive, resolute. The son of an American merchant in Demerara, where he was born in the first decade of the century, his nature was tropical, his nurture tender and solicitous. Lame from infancy, he was brought to this country when he was three years old, and was educated at first in a little town in Connecticut, and afterwards at New Haven, where the family of his father resided. At the age of sixteen he was sent to Harvard College, which he quitted before the close of his second year, in consequence of a severe illness, and entered Washington College, whence he was graduated with the highest honors. He studied law for a while at Cambridge and New Haven, and was admitted to the bar in Connecticut and Massachusetts, but if he had any practice he soon abandoned it for literature. He reaped no glory from two periodicals with which he was associated, the *New England Magazine* and the *American Monthly Magazine*; but, what with his expenditures thereon, and unfortunate investments in other directions, he managed to lose most of his patrimonial property. His next literary venture was in the *New Yorker* with Mr. Horace Greeley, and the *New World* with Mr. Epes Sargent. When I met him he was editing a weekly paper, the name of which I have forgotten. There was that in Mr. Benjamin

which placed him in the front rank of the editors of his time. He was as well and widely known as Mr. Webb or Mr. Bryant, Mr. Willis or Mr. Poe. He was a power in journalism, and, so far as he mingled in it, a power in society, for he had a ready wit and a sarcastic tongue. But he was more than this: he was a favorite poet, not so popular as Mr. Longfellow,—no American versifier was that,—but fully as popular as Mr. Willis, or Mr. Morris, or Mr. Hoffman. He had a knack of hitting the taste of average readers of poetry in his selection of subjects, and feeling enough to satisfy the taste of readers of a higher order.

Mr. Hoyt must have furnished me with the personal address of Mr. Benjamin, for instead of seeking him at the office of his paper I proceeded to his lodgings, which consisted of two or more large rooms in a large old house in Beekman Street. Once a fashionable dwelling in a wealthy neighborhood, it had fallen from its high estate, and was occupied by decadent and incipient counsellors-at-law, among whose gilded tin signs in the hall I saw the name of Mr. Benjamin and the number of his room. I knocked at his door, and was commanded to enter. I entered, and saw, seated at a table, a thick-set, broad-shouldered man, with a powerful frame, who wrote rapidly. "Well?" he said, without looking up. His voice was quick, loud, a little impatient, perhaps, but so musical and cheery that I was not disconcerted by it nor daunted by its owner. When I mentioned my name he helped himself up on his feet by the crutches that stood beside his chair, gave me his hand, and said, "I am glad to see you, Stoddard. Take a seat and make yourself at home." The frankness and heartiness of his greeting put me at once at ease. "You had no trouble in finding me?" "None: I know this neighborhood well. I ought to, for I was in an office just below when I was a boy,—a lawyer's office. You were editing the *New World* then, right back of here, in Ann Street: I used to run around there early every Saturday forenoon to get my paper." "So you read the *New World*, did you?" I convinced him that I did by referring to certain poems of his that had appeared in it, particularly one called "Gold," suggested by a saying of Joseph Bonaparte's, that gold in its last analysis was the sweat of the poor and the blood of the brave. When I parted from Mr. Benjamin, whose time I did not occupy long, for I saw he was busy, though he protested not, I felt as if I had known him all my life.

The day that I made the acquaintance of Mr. Benjamin was a red-letter day in my life, in that it cleared my mental atmosphere and sharpened my worldly vision. I ceased to distrust myself as I had done, and if not yet confident that I possessed talents was prepared to be when the time should come. His cordiality lessened my timidity, and his heartiness increased my courage, for since he forgot it I did not remember the difference between us, and when it was "Stoddard" with him it was "Benjamin" with me. He thought well enough of my taste to read his poems to me when they were "hot from the anvil," as he put it, and ask my opinion of them, and I gave it, crude as it must have been. One day he wrote a poem while I sat talking with him, a didactic piece, which he called "Press On," and in which

he enforced that persistent lesson in a series of spirited images, in one of which he, or his poetic hero, was triumphant,

And through the ebon walls of night  
Hewed down a passage into day.

He was a clear-sighted, hard-headed man, full of worldly knowledge, blunt and rough of speech, reminding me when I came to know him well of what we read of Ben Jonson, whom he resembled personally, if old Ben's portraits may be trusted. He may have had his faults,—I have been told since that he had many,—but if so I never saw them, for he was always kind, considerate, and generous to me. He was my friend when I sorely needed a friend, and I shall never forget him.

I never knew much of my next friend, with whom my relations were rather of a literary than a personal character. This was Mr. Lewis Gaylord Clark, the editor of the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, to which I sent such samples of my verse as seemed to me not unworthy of print. From continuous and patient practice I had now acquired considerable skill in the construction of melodious lines and the use of unforced rhymes, and, if I had not attained excellence of execution, I had attained definiteness of conception. I knew what I wanted to write, and, within my limitations, how to write it. It was something outside of myself, something healthier and larger, something that concerned the emotions of mankind, and not my own petty feelings. If it was a river, and I wrote about a river, I described the stretch of country through which it flowed, and its human environments: if it was a wood, and I wrote about a wood, I described its shadowy leafage, the notes of its birds, and recalled the phantoms of its aboriginal inhabitants: if it was a cathedral, and I wrote about a cathedral, I described its massive architecture and its historic associations, peopling the long-drawn aisles with mediæval worshippers, the festivity of their weddings, the solemnity of their funerals, and whatever else imagination suggested as proper to the place and time. It was obvious verse, but it suited Mr. Clark, who was an obvious man, not remarkable, perhaps, for his literary attainments, but knowing what he wanted and what his readers wanted. For he was always in touch with them at his "Editor's Table," where he presided like a genial host, whose business it was, whatever his fare, to keep them in good humor with themselves and with him. There was no money in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*,—certainly none for its contributors,—but its jaunty editor managed to live out of it, and live well, his enemies said, for if cash was not abundant with him, credit was, and what could a happy-go-lucky fellow want besides an abundance of credit? I liked Mr. Clark, what little I saw of him, and naturally, since he liked my verses and printed them speedily. It was a friendly action on his part, for it relieved me from what the first Lord Lytton calls the "dungeon of my low estate," and, if it did not give me a recognized place among authors, it enabled me to mingle among the literati.

R. H. Stoddard.







## Books of the Month.

*Found Wanting.*  
By Mrs. Alexander.

Few writers of fiction maintain as even a pace as Mrs. Alexander. You may pick up any book bearing her name with the certainty of being exhilarated and diverted. She is never dull; always original; perpetually new; and her people are as clever and as striking as those sprightly creatures who illuminate Mr. Daly's comedies.

This last book, *Found Wanting*, has now come to the paper-cover stage, which indicates a wide popular demand, and it is just issued in the well-known *Select Novel Series* of the Lippincotts. The story is about the two procrastinating lovers of May Riddell, who lives plainly in Paris with her impoverished father. These two lovers are a certain Mr. Ogilvie, who becomes May's guardian, and Mr. Barnard Carr, from Australia, who is proven to hold a very close relationship to Madam Falk, one of May's best friends. How the varying moods of the two deliberate suitors affect May's life in England and in Paris is the theme of the engaging story, which opens to the reader, as well, some fascinating vistas of Parisian life.

*My Paris Note-Book.* By the Author of "An Englishman in Paris."

Perhaps no book issued during last year aroused so much interest and curiosity as *An Englishman in Paris*. Its authorship was a mystery which the most authoritative English reviews could not fathom, notwithstanding that its anecdotes were apparently authentic and its writer had evidently participated in many of the episodes he described. Its contents were formed from the fascinating gossip of the courts and salons, the eavesdroppings, so to speak, of official personages and favored nobles, and they were eagerly devoured by a public whose appetite for such dainty mouthfuls is never satiated.

To announce another book on Parisian life by the same pen is to awaken anew the expectations of those who were fortunate enough to read the initial volume. This the Messrs. Lippincott now do, and we have before us the advance sheets of *My Paris Note-Book*.

Were it possible to surpass in sensational interest the earlier volume, we should say that these startling revelations of the opinions, ambitions, and secrets of the Emperor Louis Napoleon have accomplished it. The most intimate life of the Copper Captain is brought into view through the note-book of the writer, who has made copious transfers from the diary of his two old grand-uncles, who possessed a "deep-seated attachment to the person of Louis Napoleon, whose mother and father they had known when the latter were queen and king of Holland." Much that we had supposed was settled finally by the verdict of history is here overthrown by new light from within. History has painted the grief of Marie Louise at the news of Napoleon's abdication. Here we are told that the bearer of the news found her in bed: "There was not a cry nor a word in response," says the Emperor Louis, "and the messenger kept his eyes cast down. 'You are looking at my feet, M. de Sainte-Aulaire; I have always been told they are very pretty.'" This was the only reply to the tragic tidings. The book is compact of such alluring matter throughout, and will win a worldwide audience.

**A Manual of the  
Study of Handwriting  
and Documents.  
By Feraïfor Frazer,  
Dr. ès Sc. Nat.**

The subject of the examination of handwriting, and particularly the decision as to the falsification of documents by the study, both physical and chemical, of the paper and written characters, is from a legal point of view an extremely important one. Yet the literature on the subject is not extensive. With the exception of a few cyclopædia

articles in French and German, there is nothing to be found that can make any claim to be authoritative. Therefore Dr. Frazer has conferred a great service upon all interested in this matter, and especially upon the legal profession, in taking hold of this field and giving us a manual in which this important subject is discussed in a thoroughly scientific way and illuminated by the results of sixteen years' practice as an expert before the courts in this special class of cases. A very slight examination of this book will satisfy the general reader that the problems presented in cases of this kind, that is, of suspected forgery or alteration of signatures, are often of extreme difficulty, and that even the trained bank officer or instructor in the art of writing must necessarily be shut up to guessing pure and simple unless he can invoke the physical and chemical helps here described for the solution of the difficulty.

The larger part of the book (Chaps. I. to XV. inclusive) is devoted to the question of physical examination, and the author has contributed here most valuable original methods of research to the elucidation of his subject. We would direct especial attention to Chap. VII., on "the sequence in crossed lines," and Chaps. XIII. and XIV., in which "quantitative methods of measurement" are discussed, including numerical measurements and graphic methods, or the use of composite photography.

The author shows very clearly that here, as in other branches of study, the microscope in the hands of the untrained observer is a dangerous weapon and that its results may be worse than useless, while intelligently used it may be made to give the most valuable aid to the observer. The last three chapters are devoted to the chemical examination of inks and paper, and are equally valuable in the clearness of statement and thoroughness of treatment with the first part of the book.

The illustrations are excellent and thoroughly original in character. They show in the most convincing way the value of the methods of physical examination invented by the author for the study of handwriting. We would especially commend the clear demonstration of the value of composite photography which they give.

The book is undoubtedly destined to take its place promptly as an authoritative discussion of the questions involved.



**ROYAL**  
BAKING  
POWDER

"The United States Government reports the Royal a pure cream-of-tartar baking powder, of greater leavening strength than any other."—*Bulletin* 13, *Ag. Dep.*, p. 599.

"I have found the Royal Baking Powder superior to all others."—C. GORJU, late *Chef*, Delmonico's.

THE ROYAL Baking Powder exceeds all others in leavening power, in purity, and wholesomeness, and is used generally in families, exclusively in the most celebrated hotels and restaurants, by the United States Army and Navy, and wherever the best and finest food is required.

Made from pure and wholesome grape cream of tartar. Leaves no acid or alkali in the food.

"The Royal Baking Powder is superior to any other powder which I have examined; a baking powder unequalled for purity, strength, and wholesomeness."

WILLIS G. TUCKER, M.D.,  
*New York State Analyst.*



**ROYAL**  
BAKING  
POWDER

**A CLERICAL JESTER.**—The Rev. Mather Byles of Boston, who preached there in 1776, one fast-day effected an exchange with a country clergyman, and each went on horseback to the appointed place. They met by the way, and Dr. Byles no sooner saw his friend approaching than he put spurs to his horse and passed him at full gallop. "What is the matter?" cried the other in astonishment. "Why so fast, Brother Byles?" Brother Byles shouted over his shoulder, without slackening speed, "It is fast-day!" One day when he was busy in nailing some list upon his doors to exclude the cold a parishioner called to him, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, Dr. Byles!" "Yes, sir," replied the doctor, "and man listeth where the wind bloweth." He was once arrested as a Tory, tried, convicted and sentenced, to confinement on board a guard-ship to be sent to England with his family in forty days. A sentinel was placed over him. He was removed, replaced, and again removed. "I have been guarded, regarded, and disregarded," said the doctor. He spoke humorously of his sentinel as his "observe-a-Tory."—*San Francisco Argonaut.*

**A DESIRABLE DISQUALIFICATION.**—"We need a new office-boy, sir," said the book-keeper.

"Very well," replied the proprietor; "advertise for one. Add to the advertisement 'One not afflicted with the stamp-collecting fever preferred.'"—*Judge.*

**THE KING MEETS HIS MATCH.**—Henri Quatre was a lover of "les bons mots" as well as of "les bonnes filles." Halting at a village one day to get some dinner, he gave orders that whoever was reputed to be the greatest wit should be brought to amuse him during his repast. On the appearance of the rustic prodigy he commanded him to sit down on the other side of the table.

"What is your name?" inquired the king.

"Sire, my name is Gaillard."

"Ha! and what is the difference between Gaillard and paillard?" (a lewd fellow.)

"Sire," was the unexpected reply, "there is only the table between them."

"Ventre-saint-gris!" exclaimed Henry, laughing, "he has me there. I never expected to find so much wit in so little a village."—*All the Year Round.*

**CHINESE ADVANCE.**—Vast and populous as China is, the experience of the present century shows that she is weak for aggressive purposes. She has not the hold on territory adjacent to her borders which she could claim a hundred years ago. European nations are pressing on her both on the south and on the north. She has been forced to cede a portion of her territory to England, and has been compelled to avail herself of the help of Englishmen, both for civil administration and for military command.

All these things show that an expansion of the Chinese race does not necessarily involve an extension of Chinese dominion. On the contrary, they tend to prove that it is the order introduced by European administration which leads to the multiplication of these industrious people, and there is therefore at least as much ground for saying that, though Borneo, Sumatra, New Guinea, and the great islands of the Eastern Archipelago may be ultimately peopled by yellow races, they will be governed by the white races, as for believing that a new Chinese empire is in process of formation. A Chinese India may, in other words, be developed in these great and fertile islands.—*Edinburgh Review.*



# Cottolene

the new shortening, has become a first essential in the A B C of good cooking. It means good food, good health and a goodly saving in the end. Since the introduction of Cottolene, lard has no further use in food or kitchen. Cottolene serves every purpose of lard, and serves it without grease, odor or indigestion. Be sure and get Cottolene. Don't let any dealer palm off any of the many worthless imitations on you. Demand the genuine.

Sold in 3 and 5 pound pails by all grocers.

Made by The N. K. Fairbank Company,

Chicago, St. Louis, New York, Boston, Philadelphia,  
Montreal, San Francisco, &c.

**REMINISCENCES OF JERROLD.**—Of Jerrold's quick and pungent wit Mr. Vizetelly adduces several sparkling instances. One evening when Mrs. Jerrold, whose waltzing days might be considered over, had "taken the floor" with a casual partner, somebody asked Jerrold who it was dancing with his wife. He instantly replied, "Some member of the Humane Society." Having read in manuscript an ambitious production of a youthful poet, he was mildly interrogated shortly afterward by its author as to whether he thought the poem good. "Good, my dear boy, is not the word," was the double-edged answer, riposted like a swift rapier thrust. Another such piercing rejoinder was that he made to Heraud when the latter asked him if he had read his "Descent into Hell," an epic poem lately written by that poet. "No," responded Jerrold, "but I should like to see it." Heraud was notoriously neglectful of his person, and somebody having expressed to Jerrold his wonder that "the careless bard always had such dirty hands," was assured that "it arose from his habit of constantly putting them to his face."—*London Telegraph*.

**A STINGING RETORT.**—"We won't print any such stuff as that," said the editor, loftily, as he handed back the manuscript.

"Well, you needn't be so haughty about it," retorted the Irregular Contributor: "you are not the only one who won't print it."—*Puck*.

**RECOGNIZED THE KEYS.**—The proprietor of a travelling circus announced that on a certain night a trained elephant would play the Russian Hymn on a piano with its trunk. When the evening came, the circus was crowded to the roof with an expectant public. After the usual performances had been gone through, four men carried in a cottage piano, which they placed in the centre of the arena. When the intelligent animal was brought in, he walked slowly three times around the ring, and then, amid the keenest excitement, advanced to the piano.

With a slight movement of his trunk he opened the key-board, but scarce had he done so when a sudden change came over his appearance. His eye dilated with rage and fear, he lifted his trunk in the air, and then with a wild scream of terror he rushed out of the arena. The proprietor of the circus and the elephant's keeper held a short and hurried consultation, and then they, too, left the ring.

After a few moments the circus proprietor entered again, and announced with regret that the performance could not take place. The fact was, he said, that the elephant had recognized in the key-board of the instrument a portion of the tusks of his long-lost mother, who had fallen a prey to the ivory-hunters of Africa.—*London Million*.

**A GRATEFUL BARBER.**—Down in South Minneapolis there is a barber named Hans. The other day he found himself a victim of financial depression and seemed on the eve of a crisis. He was able, however, to borrow two dollars from his friend the shoemaker, and with this financial assistance he tided over his difficulties. His gratitude to his friend the shoemaker knew no bounds, and he was scarce able to find words in which to express his obligation. "Johann," he cried, "oh, mein Johann, if ever your fader und moder die, if ever you are hungry or haven't anything to wear, jüst come to me, Jchann, und I vill shave you for not'ing."—*Minneapolis Tribune*.



# Receipts for June.

**Asparagus Soup.**—Boil one quart of asparagus (cut in inch lengths) in one quart of water until tender, rub through a colander and return to the water in which it was boiled. Heat one pint milk, stir into it one tablespoonful butter rubbed with one of flour, and cook a few moments. Season, and pour into asparagus. Let get boiling hot, pour into tureen over toasted bread cut into dice. Serve at once.

**Cottage Pudding with Strawberry Sauce.**—One cup of milk, one-half cup of sugar, one egg, two tablespoonfuls of melted butter, one teaspoonful of Cleveland's Superior Baking Powder sifted with one pint flour. Bake half an hour, and serve with

**Strawberry Sauce.**—One large tablespoonful butter beaten to a cream. Add gradually one and one-half cups powdered sugar, and the beaten white of one egg. Beat till very light, and just before serving add one pint mashed strawberries.

You  
know what you are  
eating when you use

**Cleveland's Baking Powder**

Its true composition is  
given on every label.

"Pure" and "Sure."

**Lemon Jelly Cake.**—One cup of sugar, one scant half cup of butter, two-thirds of a cup of cold water, one egg, two cups of flour, two teaspoonfuls of Cleveland's Superior Baking Powder. Bake in layers and fill with jelly.

**Jelly.**—The grated rind and juice of one lemon; add one cup of sugar and one egg; beat thoroughly and boil in double boiler, till cooked. Spread when cold and frost with confectioner's sugar.

**White Perfection Cake.**—One cup butter rubbed with three cups sugar to a cream, one cup sweet milk, one cup corn-starch dissolved in the milk, three cups flour, two teaspoonfuls Cleveland's Superior Baking Powder, whites of twelve eggs. Ice with whites of two eggs, juice and grated rind of three oranges, thickened with confectioner's sugar.

**Strawberry Jelly.**—One quart strawberries, one large cup sugar, juice of one lemon, two-thirds package gelatine soaked in one cup cold water, one pint boiling water. Mash berries, and strain through coarse muslin. Mix sugar and lemon juice with soaked gelatine, pour over the boiling water, stir until clear, then strain through flannel bag. Add the strawberry juice, strain again, without squeezing the bag. Wet a mold, with a cylinder in center, pour in the jelly and set on ice to form.

When served, fill center with sweetened whipped cream.

Our Cook Book Contains

**400 Receipts**

Covering the whole subject from soup to dessert.

**Free** Send stamp and address

Cleveland Baking Powder Co.,  
81 Fulton St., New York

**A WESTERN PHILOSOPHER'S WISDOM.**—Every bride, when she returns from her wedding-trip, says she has married the best man in the world.

Women's eyes grow too dim for reading or sewing, but they never grow too dim to detect paint from the real color on a girl's cheeks.

The girl makes the greatest objection to any public demonstration of affection before marriage; the man makes the objection afterward.

"Dear Lord," said an Atchison man the other morning at grace, "I would ask Thy blessing on this food, but I realize it is cooked too miserably for Thee to waste Thy valuable time in blessing, so instead I urge it upon Thee that Thou instil into my wife's heart that it is better to cook steak acceptably for one man than to raise ten dollars by working two weeks for a church social." The indignant woman has gone to her mother's.—*Atchison Globe*.

**A REMARKABLE SOMNAMBULIST.**—One of the most remarkable and puzzling stories of somnambulism has recently come to light. The subject was a young ecclesiastic at a seminary. The bishop of the diocese was so deeply interested that he went nightly to the young man's chamber. He saw him get out of bed, secure paper, compose and write sermons. On finishing a page, he read it aloud. When a word displeased him, he wrote a correction with great exactness. The bishop had seen a beginning of some of these somnambulist sermons, and thought them well composed and correctly written. Curious to ascertain whether the young man made use of his eyes, the bishop put a card under his chin in such a manner as to prevent him from seeing the paper on the table before him, but he still continued to write.

Not yet satisfied whether or not he could distinguish different objects placed before him, the bishop took away the piece of paper on which he wrote and substituted several other kinds at different times. He always perceived the change, because the pieces of paper were of different sizes. When a piece exactly like his own was substituted, he used it and wrote his corrections on the places corresponding to those on his own paper. It was by this means that portions of his nocturnal compositions were obtained. His most astonishing production was a piece of music written with great exactitude. He used a cane for a ruler. The clefs, the flats, and the sharps were all in their right places, the notes were all made as circles, and those requiring it were afterwards blackened with ink. The words were all written below, but once they were in such very large characters that they did not come directly below their proper notes, and, perceiving this, he erased them all and wrote them over again.—*London News*.

**A MONKEY'S TERROR.**—Toward a flat skin of a coyote and one of a wild-cat, used as parlor rugs, our monkey showed the same fear as in the presence of a snake. If one brought them near him, he would jump wildly about or cower in terror behind a chair. This instinctive fear is apparently an inheritance from the experience of his fathers, whose kingdom was in the land where tigers and snakes were dominant and dangerous. A similar skin without hair and eyes he cared nothing for. At one time he climbed on the back of a chair to get away from the coyote skin. The chair was overturned by his efforts. He saw at once that when the chair fell it would carry him backward to the coyote, so he let go of the chair, and, seizing his chain, swung himself off out of the reach of the coyote, while the chair was allowed to go over. This was repeated afterward, with the same result.—*Popular Science Monthly*.

# BEECHAM'S PILLS

(Vegetable)

## What They Are For

Biliousness	dull headache	depression of spirits
indigestion (dyspepsia)	neuralgia	great mental depression
sickness at the stomach	fulness of the stomach	general debility
(nausea)	(distention)	backache
heartburn	shortness of breath	pain in the side
loss of appetite (anorexia)	(dyspnoea)	heaviness
coated tongue	dizziness (vertigo)	disturbed sleep
bad taste in the mouth	wind on the stomach	nightmare
torpid liver	pain or oppression	hot and throbbing head
pimples	around the heart	coldness of hands and feet
sick headache (migraine or hemicrania)	fluttering of the heart	hot skin
	(palpitation)	sallow skin
nervous headache	irritability	
	nervousness	

when these conditions are caused by constipation; and constipation is the most frequent cause of most of them.

One of the most important things for everybody to learn is that constipation causes more than half the sickness in the world, especially in women; and it can all be prevented. They who call the cure for constipation a cure-all are only half wrong after all.

Write to B. F. Allen Company, 365 Canal Street, New York, for a little book on CONSTIPATION (its causes, consequences, and correction); sent free. If you are not within reach of a druggist, the pills will be sent by mail, 25 cents a box.

WANTS SOME SATISFACTION.—Employer.—“You are late again this morning.”

Tardy Clerk.—“What difference does it make? You say I do nothing all day.”

Employer.—“Yes, but I want you to do it here.”—*Boston Transcript*.

AN AMUSING FIRE.—The fire at Barnum's Museum, July 13, 1865, was one of the most amusing that ever occurred in New York city. It occurred in the daytime. Chief John Decker was in charge, assisted by Orr, Bates, Lamb, Cleary, Everett, and Sullivan. Thousands crowded Broadway clear up to Park Place as well as Park Row, while the park in front was black with people. It was fun to see the boys at the outset of the fire bringing out Barnum's old stuffed images and wax figures. One fellow ran out with Henry Clay under one arm and General Winfield Scott under the other. Queen Victoria was dragged out by the hair of her head. Mary, Queen of Scots, was tossed out of the second-story window, followed by Hicks, the pirate. Head Carpenter Walker of the theatre, who was also a member of Engine No. 38, that lay in Ann Street, got so excited that he fell headlong down the main entrance stairway with Napoleon in one hand and Walker, filibuster, in the other. Andy Purten, the old foreman of Engine No. 14, brought out two monkeys, one of which gave him a mark that he carries to this day.

The happy family that attracted so much attention in those days were determined not to leave: the cage door was thrown wide open, and the birds and animals punched with sticks to drive them out, but few would accept their liberty, and most of them were burned to death. All of the one hundred thousand curiosities were destroyed.—*Western Fireman*.

THE QUEEN'S CURIOUS NEEDLE.—Queen Victoria is in possession of a curious needle. It was made at the celebrated needle-manufactory at Redditch, and represents the Trajan column in miniature. Scenes from the queen's life are depicted on the needle, so finely cut that they are discernible only through a microscope.—*London Letter*.

THE BARON MUNCHAUSEN.—Southey wrote to Sir Walter Scott, “Of Baron Munchausen I can tell you something. Some years ago in London I was a little startled at hearing a foreigner ushered under this title into a musical party. As this naturally led to inquiries on my part, I was referred to the gentleman himself, who very good-humoredly told me he was the nephew of the celebrated Baron Munchausen, who was a minister under Frederick of Prussia.

“It seems the old baron was a humorist, who after dinner, especially if he happened to have any guests who were likely to be taken in by his marvels, used to amuse himself by inventing or relating such marvellous adventures as are contained in the volumes which bear his name. He added that his uncle was in other respects a sensible, veracious man, and that his adventures were only told by the way of quizzing or amusing society.

“A starving German literatus, whose name I have forgot, who knew the baron and thought he had been neglected by him, compiled the book in revenge, partly from the stories of the baron, partly from other sources, and partly from his mother wit. It proved a good hit for the bookseller, as the baron's name and humor were well known, and by degrees made its way into other countries as a book of entertainment.”—*Familiar Letters of Walter Scott*.

# Mellin's Food

received the highest awards, Medal and Diploma, that were given to Infants' Foods by the World's Fair, *but* the voluntary selection and *successful* use of MELLIN'S FOOD at the Crèche, in the Children's building at the World's Fair (10,000 Babies were fed with it there), by the Matron, Miss Marjory Hall, "after a fair trial of the other Foods," was, *really*, the highest award, as no other Infants' Food in the world was thus honored and endorsed.

OUR BOOK FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF MOTHERS SENT FREE ON APPLICATION.

DOLIBER-GOODALE CO., BOSTON, MASS.

**PROTECTING COTTOLENE.**—The N. K. Fairbank Company of Chicago have lately brought suit in the United States Court against W. L. Henry, of this city, for \$5000 for infringement of their trade mark "Cottolene." The N. K. Fairbank Company set forth that they originated, prepared, and put upon the market a new food product consisting of refined Cotton Seed Oil and a small proportion of Beef Suet, making a pale yellow material of the consistency and substance of lard, almost without odor and intended to take the place of lard in cooking.

In order to indicate the source and genuineness of their new food product, they originated, coined, and use as a trade mark the word "Cottolene." The healthfulness and many other advantages of Cottolene over lard were so apparent that Cottolene became at once very popular and is now largely sold all over the country.

The new food product and its name "Cottolene" have become widely known as the product of The N. K. Fairbank Company. The trade mark is described as a "trade mark for Oleaginous Food Substances, &c.," "consisting of a head or neck of a Steer or other bovine partially enclosed by sprigs and branches of the Cotton plant."

The N. K. Fairbank Company charge that W. L. Henry, of Macon, Ga., a dealer in fresh meats and food products generally, has been and is endeavoring unlawfully to avail himself of the benefits of the name "Cottolene" and its popularity; that he has been and is selling a product similar in kind, but inferior in quality, under the name of "Cottolene," to the injury of the original and genuine "Cottolene," and to the loss and injury of its manufacturers, The N. K. Fairbank Company.

The infringements upon the trade mark of "Cottolene" have become so frequent, and so many dealers are selling an inferior article and claiming it to be Cottolene, that The N. K. Fairbank Company are determined to protect their customers and propose to sue every retail dealer who is thus imposing upon his customers and infringing upon The N. K. Fairbank Company's trade mark.—*Telegraph, Macon, Ga.*

**A ROYAL RAIN-MAKER.**—King Lobengula has the reputation of being a remarkably good hand at making a thunder-storm, and in this he gives way to no man. I remember one day in June—the month in the whole year in which you least expect rain—some natives had brought a large python into camp and were singing some of their rain-songs. It is sudden death to any native in Matabeleland who if he sees a python does not by some means or other manage to secure it and bring it in alive. The king took possession of the reptile and said he must go and make rain. I laughed at this, and said I did not think he could do so, to which the king replied, "You will see."

The python was skinned alive, its liver taken out and cooked, and the usual rain-making rites performed. Curiously enough, just before sundown the sky clouded over, and soon afterward one of the heaviest thunder-storms I had ever seen broke over the place. Next morning the king asked me if a white man could make a thunder-storm like that. I said, "No, king: if we could get you down among the farmers in the Karoo, we could guarantee you a fortune."—*Review of Reviews.*

**ENGLAND** used to have an annual "literary ladies' dinner." This year the same ladies eat a "women writer's dinner," officially so called.



# PRIMLEY'S CALIFORNIA FRUIT Chewing Gum.

**FREE BOOKS FOR CHEWING  
PRIMLEY'S CALIFORNIA FRUIT CHEWING GUM,**

the **PUREST** and **SWEETEST** thing ON EARTH. All dealers sell it; take no other.

## PRIMLEY'S Free Library

Send five outside wrappers of either California Fruit or Primley's Pepsin Chewing Gum and two 2-cent stamps, and we will send you any one of our

**1,700 FINE BOOKS.**

*List of Books sent free.*

### A FEW SAMPLE BOOKS:

**The Spy**—J. Fennimore Cooper;  
**Oliver Twist**—Charles Dickens; **The  
Greatest Thing in the World**—  
Professor Drummond; **The Vicar of  
Wakefield**—Oliver Goldsmith; **She: A  
History of Adventure**—H. Rider Hag-  
gard; **The Alhambra**—Washington  
Irving; **Under the Deadens**—Rudyard

Kipling; **The Last Days of Pompeii**—  
Sir Bulwer Lytton; **Foul Play**—Charles  
Reade; **Treasure Island**—Robert Louis  
Stevenson; **The Golden Lion of  
Granpere**—Anthony Trollope;  
**The Tour of the World  
in Eighty Days**—Jules Verne.

For ten cents and two outside wrappers we will mail you one elegant pack of our Souvenir Playing Cards.

**J. P. PRIMLEY, CHICAGO, ILL.**

**TUNNEL AND BRIDGE TO COPENHAGEN.**—Copenhagen is often cut off from the mainland during a part of the winter by accumulations of ice in the Great Belt, and it is now proposed to make a tunnel between the islands of Seeland and Funen, and a bridge between Funen and the mainland. The termini of the tunnel will be at Italskov Pynt and Knudshoved, and its length about eleven miles. The construction will be easy, owing to the soft nature of the bottom, and the island of Sprogø will be used for ventilation and other purposes. The cost of the tunnel is estimated at 20,000,000 Danish crowns (about £1,120,000), that of the bridge, at 12,000,000 crowns (£680,000), and Copenhagen will be brought two hours nearer the continent.—*London Globe*.

**CREAKING BOOTS.**—The creaking of a boot has nothing whatsoever to do with the class of leather out of which it is constructed. It creaks for the following reasons. Every sole of a boot is composed of two separate pieces of leather. In walking, these two pieces of leather, in spite of their being sewed firmly together, often rub against each other, and hence the noise.

But a boot does not always creak at the sole. It may come from the heel, and then it is caused by what is known as the "stiffener," or the material which is put in to make the leather which covers the heel stiff, becoming loose and moving about.

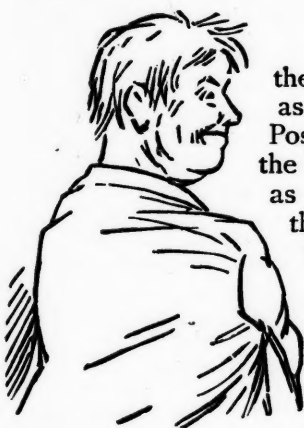
The cure for the creaking sole is as follows. The second sole must be taken off, and some soft material, like felt, placed between the two soles, and thenceforth the boots will be noiseless.

If it is the heel that is at fault, the "stiffener" must be securely sewed in, and some French chalk may be put in between it and the leather, thereby lessening the friction by which the noise is caused. Sometimes standing the soles of a pair of creaking boots in oil for twenty-four hours will have the desired effect, but this remedy is not always successful.—*London Million*.

**THE PRIVATE'S LAMENT.**—There is one feature of Uncle Sam's military service which hinders a great many men from entering it. The law provides that a private who has served ten years without promotion cannot again reenlist. The theory is that a man who has not proved himself good enough for promotion in that time is useless.

"But," said a soldier, gloomily, "that is dreadfully unjust, for you know only a limited number can be promoted anyway, and there are thousands and thousands of first-class, sober, earnest, and competent privates who serve out their ten years and don't get promoted simply because there are not enough vacancies made ahead. Now, there's my case. I'll be thrown out next year without a business or a calling of any kind. I'm only thirty, and love soldiering, and have given good and satisfactory service. But now I've got to begin life all over again, and I have no trade."—*New York Herald*.

**THE HOTTEST SPOT IN THE EAST.**—In the Eastern Hemisphere the hottest spot is on the borders of the Persian Gulf, on the southwestern coast of Persia. The thermometer during July and August never falls below 100° during the night, while the temperature during the day rises to 128° or 129°. Little or no rain falls, and yet, in spite of this terrific heat and other drawbacks, a comparatively numerous population contrive to live there, obtaining their water-supply by divers from the copious springs of fresh water which burst forth from the bottom of the sea.—*Spare Moments*.



## After Bathing

the first time with **Pearline**, you feel as if you never had been clean before. Possibly you haven't. Only baths like the Turkish or the Russian can make you as clean as **Pearline** does. There's the same feeling of lightness and luxury after it, too.

Bathing with **Pearline** costs almost nothing. It's like everything else—you would long for it, if it were expensive, but you're apt to overlook it when it's cheap. Directions on every package.

## Beware

Peddlers and some unscrupulous grocers will tell you, "this is as good as" or "the same as **Pearline**." IT'S FALSE—**Pearline** is never peddled, if your grocer sends you an imitation, be honest—send it back.

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JAMES PYLE, New York.

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### THE REASON WHY

- |  |
|--|
| It is best from a sanitary point of view, is because of its absolute purity.   |
| it is unscented, is because nothing is used in its manufacture that must be hidden or disguised.   |
| it is cheapest to use, is because it is harder and dryer than ordinary soap, and does not waste away; also because it is not filled with rosin and clay as make-weights.   |
| no boiling of clothes is needed, is because there is no adulteration in it—being absolutely pure, it can do its own work.  |
| it leaves clothes washed with it whiter and sweeter than any other soap, is because it contains no adulteration to yellow them.  |
| it washes flannels without shrinking, bringing them out soft, white, and fleecy, is because it is free from rosin, which hardens, yellows, and mats together all woollen fibres, making them harsh and coarse.       |
| three bars of it will make a gallon of elegant white soft-soap if simply shaved up and thoroughly dissolved by boiling in a gallon of water, is that it contains pure and costly ingredients found in no other soap. |
| it won't injure the finest lace or the most delicate fabric, is that all these ingredients are harmless.   |
| we paid \$50,000 for the formula twenty-five years ago, is that we knew there was no other soap like it.   |
| so many millions of women use it, is that they have found it to be the best and most economical, and absolutely unchanging in quality,   |

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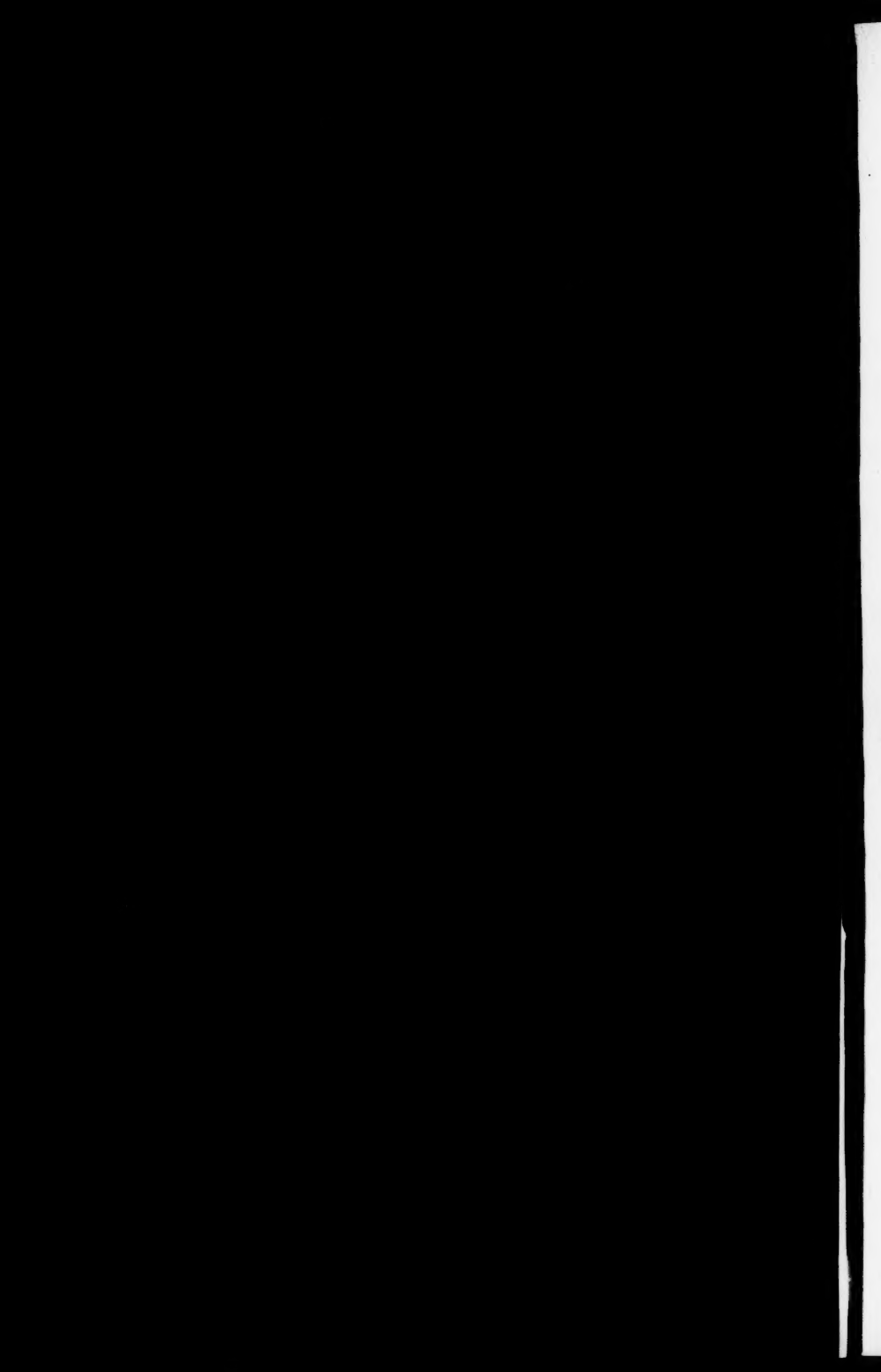
**AN ALL-AROUND MAN.**—In a Western Kansas paper there is an advertisement of a gentleman who has a faith in his works that inspires him to declare he is "a good all-around newspaper man," and says that he is out of a job. If what he says is true, society should hang its head. Here is a man who can, if he lives up to his announcement, write a poem, weigh corn, discuss the tariff, umpire a ball-game, report a wedding, saw wood, preach the gospel, beat a lawyer, describe a fire so that his readers will shed their wraps, make a dollar do the work of ten, shine at a soirée, address a horticultural society, measure calico, abuse the liquor habit, test whiskey, subscribe to charity, go without meals, attack silver, demand bimetallism, sneer at snobbery, wear diamonds, invent advertisements, overlook scandal, praise prize babies, delight pumpkin-raisers, minister to the afflicted, heal the disgruntled, fight to a finish, set type, mould opinion, sweep the office, move the world, scorn the flesh and the devil, be everything, feel everything, see everything, know everything, and do everything on this whirling footstool at a modest salary and support a family. When a real "all-round newspaper man" is out of a job the blush of shame should ring for the elevator and mount the cheek of ungrateful civilization at once.—*Kansas City Star.*

**SETTLING THE ARMENIAN QUESTION.**—It is said that foreign ambassadors to Turkey recently complained to the Sublime Porte that the prisons of Constantinople were overcrowded with political prisoners from Armenia. The government decided to remove the cause of the complaint, and shipped three hundred of the prisoners on board a man-of-war for transportation to Africa. The vessel was gone only a very short time, however, and it was a mystery what had become of the prisoners, until a Russian merchant-vessel in the harbor of Constantinople, while raising her anchor a few days since, brought up with it fifteen hair-cloth sacks, such as are used by Turkish merchants for packing goods for shipment. At first the Russian thought that he had found traces of smugglers, but when he came to examine the sacks he found that they were filled with human bodies, eighteen or twenty in a sack. The bodies were ascertained to be those of Armenians. It is said that the grand vizier said not long ago that he would settle the Armenian question by annihilating the Armenians, and he is thought to be in a fair way to fulfil his threat. The matter has been reported to Russia, as it is thought that some of the murdered Armenians were Russian subjects.—*Constantinople Letter.*

**THE BEHEMOTH.**—The mammoth, or behemoth, is not yet universally regarded as extinct. According to Siberian and Chinese belief, the race is merely banished underground, its "blind life" being instantly terminated by a glimpse of the sun's or even of the moon's rays. The inference might also be called a logical one from the state of the unearthed remains.

In several cases the great beast has emerged from his millennial retirement as completely arrayed as if death had only just overtaken him, his hide densely clothed with fulvous wool, and that again covered by long black hair, his mane falling over his shaggy shoulders, his antediluvian eyes actually staring from their sockets. Contemporary dogs and wolves find mammoth flesh appetizing, in spite of its semi-fossil character. Mammoth bones have been proved to contain a remunerative amount of gelatin, and in Kamchatka to this day mammoth fat is largely used for fuel.—*Edinburgh Review.*







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**MOLLY PITCHER'S GRAVE.**—On a little knoll about two miles south of West Point and hardly fifty yards from the Hudson River are thirty unmarked graves. In the centre of the fifth grave on the west side a tree, much larger than any of its neighbors, towers aloft and forms a monument over the ashes of Molly Pitcher. The Swim and Dennison families, whose descendants live near West Point, cared for Molly during the latter part of her life, but her ashes lie in the potter's field. Molly Pitcher, the heroine of many battles, who took from her husband's dying grasp the ramrod which drove home charges to shatter her adopted country's chains, lies alone and forgotten on the banks of the Hudson, without a stone to mark her grave. The place has passed into the hands of J. Pierpont Morgan, whose beautiful summer residence is in the immediate neighborhood. It is said that Mr. Morgan will, in the near future, erect a fitting monument to the memory of brave Molly Pitcher.—*New York Press*.

**PAIN-ENDURING ANIMALS.**—The manner in which animals and birds endure pain should awaken the sympathy of all thinking people. Horses in battle furnish a striking example of this power of endurance. After the first stinging pain is felt they make no sound, but bear it with mute wondering endurance, and when in the silence of the night a groan comes from the battle-field it is because of loneliness,—the craving for human companionship which is so necessary to once domesticated animals.

A dog will go for days with a broken leg without complaint, but the pleading, wistful look would attract attention from any one not totally blind to all sensibility.

A cat, wounded by stick or stone, or caught in some trap from which it has either gnawed or pulled its way, will crawl to some quiet out-of-the-way place and endure silently agony which we could not endure.

Cattle will meet the thrust of the butcher's knife without a sound. The wild dove with shot from the hunter's gun burning in its tender flesh will fly to some high bough or lie upon the ground and die, and no sound will be heard save the dripping of blood upon the leaves.

The stricken deer will speed to some thick wood and there in pitiful submission await the end.

The eagle stricken in high air will struggle to the last, but there will be no sound of pain, and the proud, defiant look will not leave the eyes until the lids close over them and shut out the sunlight they loved so well.—*New York Herald*.

**HUMORS FOR THIRTEEN CLUBS.**—The amiable humorists who by being members of so-called thirteen clubs and by attending the dinners of those organizations show by act and declaration their total disregard of all foolish old superstitions can obtain some foibles from their English cousins.

In London the guests of the Thirteen club decorate their button-holes with toy skeletons and their shirt-fronts with green ties. A waiter breaks a dish as the signal for dinner to be served, and guests pass under a ladder to the dining-room. Each guest finds a coffin-shaped salt-cellar and a skull at his plate, together with a small mirror, which he smashes to show that he has no fear of undergoing seven years' bad luck in consequence.

The menu is adorned with pictures of witches, bats, and black cats, and the chairman begins by spilling salt and inviting the other diners to do likewise. Each toast is proposed in thirteen words, and each response is supposed to take up thirteen minutes.—*New York Herald*.





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**ADVERTISER'S HANDY GUIDE.**—Compiled and published by Bates & Morse Advertising Agency, New York. 766 pages, 4½ x 6½. Flexible covers. Price, \$2.00. The tenth issue of the *Advertiser's Handy Guide* is indeed a book of the century—progressive, up-to-the-times, opportune. All desirable features of previous issues, of arrangement, statistics of circulation of all prominent daily and weekly journals, the grouping of special publications, are reproduced in the present volume. The principal change is in the careful revision which establishes the authority of the handy volume.—*Journal of Education*, Boston.

**SINGING FISH.**—The scievia, a little six-inch chub variety of the lagoons of Italy, sticks its head above the water and sings a dainty song equal to that of some species of warbling birds. *Irigla hirundo* (the sea-swallow) is known to every fisherman of the Danube and the Rhine by the peculiar grunting noise it makes. *Irigla nolitans* makes a whining noise like a puppy, while the scievia gather in bands to hold regular concerts, which no doubt originated the fable of the sirens. Some naturalists have likened the note of the gurnard to that of the cuckoo. There are many different kinds of fish which give utterance to more or less musical tones. The maigre, a large sea-fish, when swimming in shoals, utters a purring noise that may be heard from a depth of twenty fathoms. Lieutenant White, in his "Voyage to the China Seas," relates that his crew and himself were extremely astonished by hearing certain musical notes from beneath and around the vessel. They were various, like the bass notes of an organ, the sound of bells, the croaking of frogs, and a pervading twang which the imagination might have attributed to the vibrations of some enormous harp. For a time the mysterious music swelled upon them, and finally formed a universal chorus all around, but as the vessel ascended the river the sounds diminished in strength and soon ceased.—*Home Magazine*.

**VICTORIA'S INCOME FROM NOTHING.**—A curious discussion took place at Southampton town council recently. The finance committee recommended the payment to "the queen's most excellent majesty" of ten pounds for fee farm rents. The junior bailiff was called on to explain, and he replied that the committee had been searching for the farm, but could not find it. The money had been paid to the crown for centuries, but the locality of the farm could not be traced. It was suggested that the check should be withheld and the government told to distrain on the land if they could find it, but it was stated that the money had already been paid. It was directed that diligent search should be made for the estate and no further checks drawn until the farm was discovered. One of the committee strongly protested against referring the subject back. For years they had been trying to discover the whereabouts of the land, and it was a wild-goose chase altogether. It was suggested that the best way would be to call upon the crown to show the land upon which fee farm rents were charged.—*London Correspondent*.

**SOME FACTS ABOUT MURDERERS.**—Of the 6546 murderers in the United States in 1890, 102 were professional men, 88 were officials, 698 were farmers, 29 lumberers, 212 miners, 19 fishermen, 173 commercial men, clerks, and the like; 380 were railroad men, 1088 were artisans, 690 were engaged in personal service, waiters, porters, servants, and the like; 2252 were unskilled laborers, and 21 are classed as miscellaneous. At the time of the homicide 5659 were employed, 1225 were unemployed, and 467 unknown.



